

CECI Connections

NEWSLETTER

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Colleagues,

As we step into the vibrant season of spring, we embrace not only the renewal of nature but also the exciting opportunities for growth in our academic journey. Spring is a time for fresh beginnings, inspiration, and the perfect moment to reflect on the progress we've made so far.

In CECI, we're committed to nurturing minds, fostering creativity, and preparing students for a bright future. As the flowers bloom, so do our students, faculty, and community. Let's make the most of this season to continue striving for excellence, engage in new ideas, and celebrate the pursuit of knowledge.

Here's to a season of growth and success!

~Sherril Soman
CECI Dean



CECI Events



CECI Year-End Winter Meeting

Monday, April 14, 2025

Let's celebrate together as we recognize our colleagues' achievements, our new and retiring faculty and staff, and listening to updates within our college.

Seidman Center
1008 Multi-Purpose Room
Breakfast provided.

All CECI faculty and staff are invited and encouraged to attend the year-end college meeting on Monday, April 14.

The meeting will run from 9:00 AM-11:00 AM, with breakfast being served at 9:00 AM.

We look forward to celebrating another successful year of academic, research, and community engagement excellence!

CECI Unit Spotlight



The **Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP)** is dedicated to fostering and strengthening collaborations between the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI) faculty, staff, and students and K-12 schools across West Michigan. Through high-quality programming and resources, we support alumni, educators, and students, ensuring meaningful engagement in the field of education. As we continue expanding our support for all CECI departments, we are especially focused on building partnerships that enhance PK-12 education. Our initiatives include a variety of impactful programs and events, such as the [Grand Valley Student Reporting Labs](#), which will be featured at the 2025 Reach Higher Showcase on April 17.

One of the standout programs within CEP is the [Educators of Color Network \(ECN\)](#). This student-led organization is dedicated to providing support, guidance, awareness, and meaningful connections for GVSU's pre-service educators, with an emphasis on those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). The ECN fosters a strong sense of community, while offering networking opportunities, scholarships, professional development, financial resources, alumni advocacy - all designed to inspire and empower future educators of color. Through its efforts, ECN has helped secure a \$166,000 grant to further the work of diversifying the teacher workforce and spearhead the development of a Kent County-wide educators of color collaborative for in-service and retired educators.

The [Groundswell Stewardship Initiative](#), led by CEP, began with just seven schools in Kent County with the mission to support K-12 students explore local environmental issues and take action through stewardship projects. Since 2009, Groundswell has secured over \$3 million in grant and gift funding from external funders, empowering more than 40,000 students, and implementing 334 projects. **We invite CECI to be part of this impactful work by attending the Groundswell Student Project Showcase on May 14, 2025, from 5:00-6:30 pm in the DeVos Center and Courtyard.** Join over 500 PK-12 students, educators, administrators, partners, and community members and learn directly from our students about their projects. Learn more and [RSVP here](#).



CEP also supports the [Education Alumni Network](#). On March 18, 2025, over 200 education students, administrators, and volunteers took part in our biannual Cover Letter and Resume Roundtable. Superintendents, principals, and Human Resources Directors provided personalized feedback, shared insights on the hiring process, and highlighted current job openings in their districts. Beyond professional development, the alumni group hosts gatherings and events throughout the year, fostering connections and community.

CEP is proud to lead the celebration of 60 years of Education Programs at GVSU! **Join us on May 7, 2025, from 4:30-6:30 pm for an unforgettable evening of reflection, celebration, and fun!** Don't miss this special event - learn more [here](#).



[RSVP for the 60th Anniversary Education Celebration](#).

For more information about CEP, [please visit our website](#). We look forward to partnering with faculty and staff to support the mission of GVSU.



Each year, the GVSU Student Senate selects a distinguished professor who has made a significant impact on their students and the GVSU community. This special event allows professors to share their wisdom and life experiences, as if it were their final lecture. This event was inspired by [Randy Pausch](#), who gave a final lecture to his students because of his diagnosis with cancer. The professor selected this year by the Student Senate was **Adrian Copeland**, Assistant Professor in the **School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies (SCCJLS)**. She has practiced law in Grand Rapids for 16 years and has expertise in civil litigation, civil pretrials and trials, and personal injury.

Dr. Jina Lee, Associate Professor in the **School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies (SCCJLS)**, led five students from the Alpha Phi Sigma – Criminal Justice Honors Society to Denver, CO to participate in The Alpha Phi Sigma Crime Scene Investigation competition in mid-March, where they earned second place in the competition. While there, they toured the Denver Police Museum and Crime Lab, and networked with the [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Conference](#) attendees. GVSU students also attended the conference last year, winning first place in the Crime Scene Investigation competition.





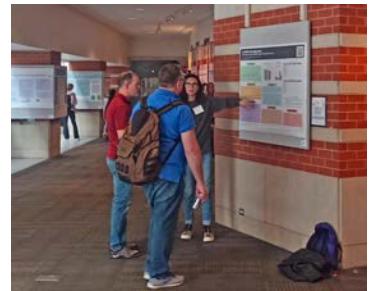
On Friday, March 21, 16 students from the **School of Criminology, Criminal Justice and Legal Studies (SCCJLS)** were inducted into [Lambda Epsilon Chi \(LEX\)](#), the national honor society for **Legal Studies** students. To be inducted, students must demonstrate superior academic performance and be near completion of the legal studies degree program. This year's ceremony was hosted by Warner Norcross + Judd in their downtown Grand Rapids office. The ceremony was attended by inductees, faculty, and the Legal Studies Advisory Board.

The first cohort of **Birth to Kindergarten (BK) majors** is getting ready to graduate this April. Not only are they the first in the major to graduate from GVSU, but they are among the first in the state of Michigan to graduate with the new professional license to teach young children. In the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, GVSU faculty began creating a program that addressed observation and documentation, integrated curriculum, and play to meet the requirements set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for the new **Birth to Kindergarten, General and Special Education program**. This stands as the only education major entirely housed in CECI. These graduates represent a shift in the profession, a shift that names the extraordinary work that goes into preparing to work with young children and their families, worthy of the same recognition as those who completed programs in elementary and secondary education. This moment is big for these graduates, but it's also big for the profession! We want to recognize and thank all the students, faculty, administrators, staff, and community partners who have helped make this moment possible. Please join us as we celebrate our students, this program, all who supported its inception and implementation, and the promise of many years to come of creating equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive early childhood teachers!



This semester, students in **CJ 400: Qualitative Research Methods**, taught by **Jackie Doyon-Martin, Professor and Director of the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice and Legal Studies (SCCJLS)**, participated in an International Virtual Exchange (IVE) with students at Kingston University in London. Working in groups of four, the students researched and prepared 10-minute comparative video presentations, contrasting UK and US law. Judges of the video competition included a supreme court justice from Canada, barristers from London, and our very own **Naoki Kanaboshi (SCCJLS)**. This activity was one component of a larger partnership between the SCCJLS and the [School of Law, Social and Behavioural Sciences at Kingston University](#).

Over 50 CECI students to offer posters and presentations at two annual GVSU events. Forty-seven CECI students had research posters, presentations or zines at [Student Scholars Day](#) on April 9, 2025. On April 15, several **CECI graduate students** will have research posters displayed at the [Graduate Showcase](#) at DeVos Center's Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall from 3:00-4:30 p.m. If you have time, please support our student scholars participating.



[2025 Student Scholars Day Photo Album](#)

From CECI CACC



Thank you to everyone who decorated Kids' Food Basket (KFB) sack supper bags and attended the CECI Community Impact Event held in February in the Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall. The bags looked amazing and we are impressed with the artistic abilities of our colleagues! We are happy to report that a **total of 2,335 decorated bags** are being delivered to Kids' Food Basket.

Drum roll, please! **CONGRATULATIONS** to the **School of Community Leadership and Development (SCLD)** on winning the G.O.A.T. trophy this year! Their unit submitted a total of 993 decorated sack supper bags. New this year was an option to give a monetary donation, as well. CECI faculty and staff donated **\$455** to this worthy cause. A special shout out goes to **Educational Leadership and Counseling (ELC)**, as the unit who gave the most in donation dollars. Both units will be recognized during the CECI Year-end Winter Meeting on Monday, April 14, in the Seidman Center.

[2025 CECI KFB Bag-A-Thon Photo Album](#)

Publications/Presentations

Brian Johnson, Professor in the **School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies (SCCJLS)**, published the book [Through Blood and Brotherhood](#). Described as, "The war of a young German soldier in Yugoslavia told through his diaries and complemented by the oral histories of his comrades—and the enemies he fought," the book is based on the detailed diaries of Gottfried Weber, a naïve patriotic teen from a small town in Saxony who is willingly drafted into the German Wehrmacht and sent to Yugoslavia for occupation duty.

Priscilla Kimboko, Professor in the **School of Community Leadership and Development (SCLD)**, presented at the monthly lunch meeting of the West Michigan Municipal Executives held March 19, 2025 at the Walker City Hall. Her presentation to area city and county managers was on the qualities of, and resources for, developing age friendly communities.

Quincy Williams, Internship and Undergraduate Coordinator for **Public and Nonprofit Administration** in the **School of Community Leadership and Development (SCLD)**, and **Students Leaving a Mark (SLAM)** were recently featured in [GVNext](#) about their 2025 Spring Break service trip to Asheville, NC to help the community in their recovery efforts from 2024's Hurricane Helene.



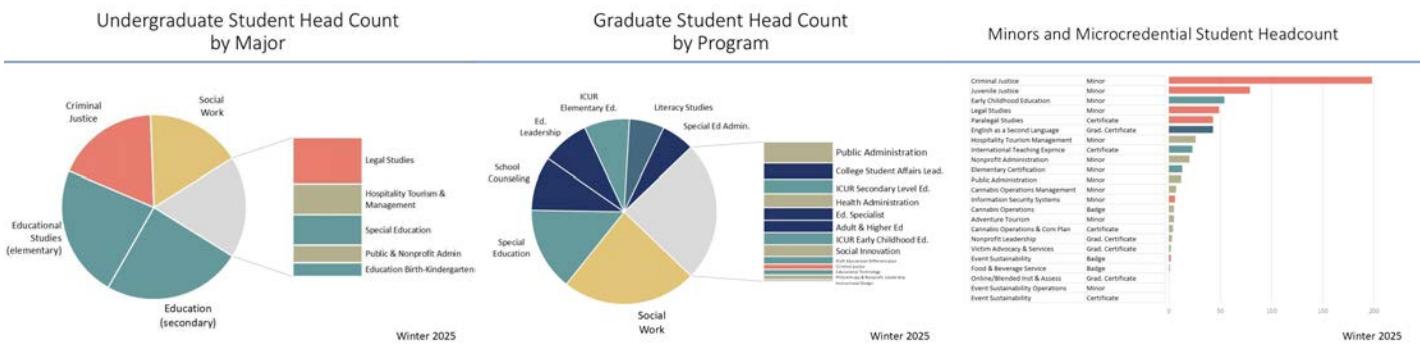
(Pictured above from left to right: Brian Johnson, Priscilla Kimboko, Quincy Williams)

Important Notices

Amway Soccer Stadium Construction Update: Information was recently shared with the neighboring properties around the Pew Campus about the new Amway soccer stadium construction. [Please see this flyer for more information](#). Please note items B and C that will impact travel near the Pew Campus in the upcoming months: [May 2025 \(actual Date TBD\)](#) – one week Mt Vernon and Pearl St Exit Closure; [June 2025 \(actual Date TBD\)](#) – 5 day utility work closure on Winter Ave near YMCA/IDC/Starbucks.

All classrooms in L.V. Eberhard will be taken offline in Fall 2026. Although originally planned to close next fall, the third and fourth floors will remain available until Fall 2026, except for EC311 and EC411. The third and fourth floors will be remodeled as part of [Blue Dot](#). Classrooms on the fifth, sixth and seventh floors will reopen after construction allows safe access. **This summer, the active learning classroom AV equipment and furniture in EC311 and EC411 will be moved to [DEV 223E](#) and [DEV 205E](#) respectively.** They will have improved projectors and teaching stations, plus each room will have two projectors facing the front of the room that allows the sharing of two different images or the same image on both screens.

Did You Know?



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

(Click on above graphs to enlarge.)

Save The Date!



OCTOBER 2ND, 2025

INNOVATE TOGETHER, TRANSFORM TOMORROW

Introducing the [GV Technology Summit](#)—a university-wide celebration of technological progress and innovation. Sponsored by Information Technology and developed in collaboration with colleges and departments across the university, this event welcomes faculty, staff, and students alike.

Date: October 2, 2025, 12:00-5:00 PM

Location: DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health (DCIH)

Have you been part of an exciting project or technology initiative that would make a great presentation? We'd love to hear from you! [Submit a proposal](#) to become a presenter and share your insights with fellow faculty and staff.

Interested in attending? [Register now to secure your spot!](#)

Stay informed by [bookmarking the event webpage](#) — we'll be updating it regularly with new details about speakers, topics, and more.

Do you have an event question? [Email us to connect!](#)

University Governance

[CECI University Committees](#)

[Representation Slidedeck](#)

[Representation List](#)

[Winter 2025 Election Results](#)

College Governance

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Winter 2025 Election Results

Faculty Council

All committee meetings are from **9:00 AM - 10:00 AM** via Zoom and are open to all CECI faculty.

Remaining Winter 2025 Meetings:

Wednesday, April 16

College Advisory and Communication Committee

Remaining Winter 2025 Meetings:

Wednesday, April 16



- April 11 - [Graduate School Citations for Academic Excellence](#) | 5:00 PM | Loosemore
- April 14 - Year-End Winter Meeting | 9:00 AM | Seidman 1008 Multipurpose Room
- April 14 - [Student Awards Convocation](#) | 5:00 PM | Eberhard Center
- April 15 - [Graduate School Showcase](#) | 3:00 PM | Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall
- April 25 - [Commencement](#) | 7:00 PM | Van Andel Arena
- May 7 - [Education Program's 60th Anniversary Celebration](#) | 4:30 PM | Eberhard Center

CECI HAPPENINGS

CECI Happenings is an informational form that can be submitted by any faculty, staff, or student to promote an event, publication, etc. that they would like shared to CECI social media platforms and/or the newsletter.

Important Dates

WINTER PERSONNEL ACTIONS

- January 8 - Winter Personnel Portfolios due to Unit Heads
- February 23 - Unit Heads submit appropriate winter personnel documents to Dean
- February 29 - Dean forwards winter personnel documents to CPC
- March 29 - CPC submits winter personnel recommendations to Dean
- April 19 - Dean submits winter personnel recommendations to Provost
- June 1 - Provost makes winter personnel decisions and notifies all appropriate people

Resources

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Thanks to all those who contributed to the April 2025 edition of *CECI Connections*:

Sherril Soman, Neal Buckwalter, Rita Cooper, Jackie Doyon-Martin, Mark Hoffman, Noah Houchlei, Jamie Langlois, Kathryn Ohle, Clay Pelon, Mara Spears, and Vicky Wright.

Please send items to share in future editions of CECI Connections to Victoria A. Stubbs at stubbsvi@gvsu.edu.

Questions? cecidean@gvsu.edu | (616) 331-6821 | gvsu.edu/ceci

Connect with us!



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