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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
AND COMMUNITY
INNOVATION**
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY®

June 2025

Colleagues,

The month of June brings an opportunity for inclusive celebration in multiple ways as we celebrate [Pride Month](#), [Juneteenth](#) and [National Caribbean American Month](#). I expect that some of you may be as surprised as I was to learn about the existence of a National Caribbean American Month, but of course, once I learned of it, I knew I had to take the opportunity to acknowledge my own cultural background with an honorable mention. Jamaica's motto is 'Out of Many, One People,' which means embracing a myriad of cultural contributions that melded to create our own unique mix of African, European, Asian and Taino (indigenous) traditions and people (like me). This is not to say that the country is advanced in its celebration of all aspects of our humanity, many still live closeted lives where their sexual orientation and gender identity may be acknowledged, but not publicly honored. We are all on this journey together and I'm hopeful that there will be a day where we can all be free to celebrate all of our individual and collective identities.

Freedom will not come/ Today, this year/ Nor ever.
Through compromise and fear.

I have as much right / As the other fellow has



To stand/ On my two feet/ And own the land...

I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.

Freedom/ Is a strong seed/
Planted/ In a great need.
I live here, too/ I want my freedom/ Just as you.

Excepted from "Freedom" by Langston Hughes

~Sherril Soman
CECI Dean

A blue rectangular banner with a black border. The text "CECI Unit Spotlight" is written in a white, cursive script font, centered within the banner.

CECI Unit Spotlight



While many college students spent their spring break lounging on beaches or relaxing at home, a dedicated group of Grand Valley State University (GVSU) students chose a different path—one rooted in service, learning, and meaningful impact.

This year, nearly 30 members of **Students Leaving a Mark (SLAM)**, the **Public and Nonprofit Administration's (SCLD)** signature Spring Break Service Learning Program, traveled to Asheville, North Carolina, to assist communities still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Helene, which struck the region in 2024.



Over the course of four days, students rolled up their sleeves and got to work—clearing debris from yards, organizing warehouses, and stocking shelves at food pantries. Their efforts supported the work of the Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM), a volunteer-led organization that serves individuals and families affected by poverty, hunger, and homelessness in Buncombe County.

But SLAM is about more than just service—it's about transformation.



"SLAM is more than a trip—it's a launchpad for lifelong civic engagement, personal growth, and leadership," said Nile Stewart, junior social work major and nonprofit minor. "I returned from our SLAM experiences in North Carolina with new perspectives, deeper empathy, and a drive to create change in our local and global communities."

Since its inception, SLAM has offered GVSU students a hands-on approach to understanding real-world issues like food insecurity, housing inequality, prison reform, education, and environmental justice. Each trip is carefully designed to pair service work with structured reflection and discussion, helping students connect their fieldwork to broader systemic issues.



"We don't just give back—we bring the lessons home," said SLAM president, Dallas Mathews.

The SLAM program has become a vital platform for GVSU students to grow as civic-minded professionals. Through immersive experiences like the Asheville trip, participants gain not only practical skills, but a deeper understanding of community, equity, and the power of public service.

As SLAM continues to evolve, it remains a cornerstone of service learning at GVSU—proving that even one week can leave a lasting mark.

GVNext SLAM Article

Save The Date!



Celebrations



Shannon Cohen, MPA '11, received the JEDI Communicator of the Year award at the [2025 PRoot Awards](#), presented by the West Michigan Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. This awards program annually highlights the "best of the best" public relations campaigns, tactics, and professionals in West Michigan. Cohen is the Founder & CEO of Shannon Cohen, Inc., where she specializes in developing customized emotional intelligence, equity, and wellness colloquia for organizations across diverse sectors and industries.



Rachel (Stewart) Gorman, HTM '14, was selected as one of 14 women to be part of the inaugural group of **Crain's Grand Rapids Business Women of Influence**. This program "recognizes leaders who are at the top of their game when it comes to moving West Michigan forward." Stewart is the President and CEO of the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce.



KConnect, in partnership with the [West Michigan Teacher Collaborative \(WMTTC\)](#), and **Grand Valley State University**, have been awarded \$200,000 from the [Make MI Home initiative](#) to pilot a community-based strategy addressing the urgent educator shortage in West Michigan. The *Teach Here* pilot will remove barriers into the teaching profession and provide a variety of supports for the next generation of educators. The grant is part of the State of Michigan's talent retention and attraction strategy, Make MI Home, which invests in innovative, community-driven solutions to address challenges across the state. [Read the full press release.](#)



Sara Trigg, assistant superintendent of the Ottawa County Juvenile Detention Center, was awarded the **Internship Site Supervisor of the Year Award**, presented by the GVSU Career Center. For AY 2024-25, 53 supervisors were nominated by their student interns, and Trigg (**who has worked with both Criminal Justice and Social Work students over the years**) was selected by the Career Center Team. Ms. Trigg's work with and for our students is exceptional—her award is well deserved! [You can view the nomination video for Sara Trigg here.](#)



Adrienne Wallace, MPA '08, associate professor of advertising and public relations, was elected to serve the Commission on Public Relations Education as director-at-large and co-chair of the research committee. She also served as a co-editor and wrote a chapter in a book, [Public Relations and the Rise of AI](#), published by Routledge.

CECIpalooza



2025 Summer Concert List

This summer, there are over 200 FREE concerts in parks and squares across West Michigan! Would you, as an individual, department, or group, like to invite your CECI colleagues to visit one of these concerts in the park? If so, check out the [free concert list](#) compiled from local government and chamber of commerce websites, then send your invitation and venue information to cecidean@gvsu.edu. Also, please suggest where we might meet at the venue, before the concert. The Dean's Office will post the invitation and information on their webpage and share it on their social media platforms.

The concerts from the above list occur on all days of the week with start times usually between 6 and 7 p.m. Concerts last for about 90 minutes, and musical styles range from alt country to zydeco. Venues are family-friendly with guests bringing their own chairs and food. Most also have food trucks on site and some allow or serve wine and beer.

These concerts present a fun opportunity for us to mingle with each other and introduce our family and friends to colleagues.

CECI in the Community

2025 Career Exploration Day at Explorer Elementary School: Chasity Bailey-Fakhoury, CECI associate dean, was invited by the Kent School Services Network (KSSN) Community Schools Coordinator, Cheyenne Buelterman-Fernández, to share her career journey with 4th graders. This included her doing a hands-on lesson that they then taught to their young 5s "student." It was an adorable and enjoyable morning for Chasity and her Explorer Elementary friends. Several future teachers in the making!



Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS) Foundation 2025 Mindshare Gala: The **CECI Dean's Office** sponsored a table at the 2025 Mindset Gala with the proceeds going to programs and initiatives that provide a well-rounded education for students in the GRPS system, addressing both their academic and non-academic needs to support their overall growth and success. This year's CECI-invited guests included a student and colleagues from the **Center of Educational Partnerships (CEP)**, **Grow Your Own Graduate Teacher Certification (GYO GTC)**, and the **West Michigan Teacher Collaborative (WMTTC)**.



60th Anniversary of Education Celebration: CECI and the Center for Educational Partnerships, in collaboration with the [Education Alumni Network](#), hosted an anniversary celebration to commemorate 60 years of education programs at Grand Valley. Around 130 guests, including alumni, recent graduates, retired faculty, and GVSU mentor teachers, gathered on May 7 at the Eberhard Center to reflect on the program's legacy and its future. [Read more about the event in FORUM](#).



Groundswell Stewardship Initiative Showcase: The **Center for Educational Partnerships** held its annual showcase for the [Groundswell Stewardship Initiative](#) on May 14. This event highlighted the various projects, data, and research in

environmental sciences that PK-12 students completed during this school year. Groundswell's mission is to support and inspire students to care for their place by providing educators with professional learning opportunities, project funding, and partnerships. [Read more about the showcase in GVNext.](#)



Important Notices



New Walk-Up IT Service Desk at the Seidman Center! As of May 5, there is a new walk-up IT service desk open to GVSU students, faculty, and staff on the downtown City Campus - Pew. Whether you need help with Wi-Fi, password resets, setting up software, or troubleshooting a device, the team is ready to assist. Just stop by during open hours.

GVSU IT Service Desk | City Campus - Pew
2046 SCB (L. William Seidman Center)
Monday - Thursday: 7:30 AM - 7:00 PM
Friday: 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM
Saturday/Sunday: CLOSED



CECI Dean's Innovation Grant
Application and
Requirements

CECI Dean's
Innovation Grant
Website

Now accepting submissions for the [CECI Dean's Innovation Grant](#), with two opportunities to apply. The purpose of this grant is to **increase sponsored research, interdisciplinary programming, and/or creative activities.** The source of this one-time funding is through the [Office of Sponsored Programs \(OSP\)](#), and the acquisition of funds for the CECI Dean's Innovation Grant from CSCE/OSP is dependent on success measures of funded projects which will be evaluated in two years. The recipient of the funding will be **required to seek external funding** within the timeline of their application.

- **Eligibility:**
 - Faculty members (tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track)
 - Collaborations between faculty (internal and external to the College) and students are highly encouraged
- **Grant Use:**
 - Funding may be utilized for activities directly related to the development of a competitive proposal for external funding
- **Grant Exclusions:**

- Funding cannot be used for standard operational expenses such as salaries, equipment purchases that are not directly related to the proposal development, or travel that is not specifically for proposal development

CECI Dean's Innovation Grant Application Deadlines: Monday, September 15, 2025 and Sunday, March 15, 2026.

End of Fiscal Year Preparation for Faculty



GVSU Expense Card (formerly P-card) Reminders from Procurement Services:

- **Business Purpose Requirements for Expense Reports**

- When documenting the business purpose of a purchase, think of it this way, if someone outside of GVSU read your description, would they understand exactly what was bought and why? A vague statement like "Office supplies for event" or "Travel expenses" is **not** detailed enough. **Instead, be specific:**

- **"Notebooks, pens, & folders for Finance Dept. training on 3/15/2025"**
- **"Hotel and airfare for Jane Doe to attend the NACUBO Conference, supporting professional development from 3/3/25 to 3/6/25 in Las Vegas, NV."**

- Providing a clear and complete business purpose helps ensure compliance, facilitates auditing, and keeps GVSU financially transparent.

- **Missing Receipt?**

- Lost a receipt? While checking the "Missing Receipt" box may document the issue, it doesn't erase the requirement, **missing receipts are still considered a policy violation**. Receipts serve as essential proof of purchase, ensuring accountability and compliance. **If you're missing one, take these steps:**
 - First, try to obtain a duplicate from the vendor. Many businesses can reissue receipts upon request.
 - Provide as much detail as possible in your explanation, including the date, amount, vendor, items purchased, and business purpose.
- Frequent missing receipts could lead to further review, so keep those records organized!

- **Monthly Reconciliation Deadlines**

- Timely reconciliation keeps GVSU's financial records accurate and up to date. Remember, **expense reports are due by the last day of the month in which your transaction posts**. For example, if your transaction posts on March 5th, it must be included in an expense report by March 31st.
- **Typically, all transactions should be submitted in a single report unless some post late**. In that case, you have two options:
 - Create a second report for the late transactions.
 - Include them in the next month's report.
- Staying on top of reconciliation ensures compliance and prevents delays.

Workday Expense Report Job Aids

Publications/Presentations

MaryJohn Adkins-Cartee, David Bair, Mary Bair, Nagnon Diarrassouba, and Rui Niu-Cooper, all faculty from the **Literacy, Educational Foundations, and Technology (LEFT)** department, presented multiple presentations at the 2025 American Educational Research Association conference in April.

Patty Janes, professor of **Hospitality and Tourism Management (SCLD)**, was interviewed by WalletHub for a story about [the best and worst cities for a staycation](#).

Sherie Klee, professor in the **Teaching and Learning (T&L)** department and international director for **COST (Consortium of Overseas Student Teaching)**, was part of the planning committee for the University of Wyoming Educator Summit on Global Competency. The summit hosted more than 50 participants, including international educators, university professors and students, as well as K-12 educators.

Cathy Meyer-Looze and **Rick Vandermolén**, both associate professors in the **Educational Leadership and Counseling (ELC)** department, co-authored the article, "[Instructional Leader Partnerships: Superintendent Impact](#)," in the journal *School Leadership Review*.

Terry Stockton, assistant professor in the **Literacy, Educational Foundations, and Technology (LEFT)** department, recently had the article, "[Interrogating professional identity: An analysis of preservice teachers' racial identity development](#)," published in the *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*.



Pictured Above:

Top Row: MaryJohn Adkins-Cartee, David Bair, Mary Bair, Nagnon Diarrassouba, Rui Niu-Cooper, Patty Janes
Bottom Row: Sherie Klee, Cathy Meyer-Looze, Rick Vandermolén, Terry Stockton

Campus Events



Mark your calendars for a series of events honoring Juneteenth. Juneteenth is a federal holiday that commemorates when the last enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas, learned of their freedom on June 19, 1865—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

June 18, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM | Black Faculty and Staff Affinity (BFSA) Group Juneteenth Dinner | Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall, DeVos E, City Campus - Pew. [BFSA Dinner RSVP](#)

June 19, 12:00 PM | Community Event: Juneteenth Parade & Celebration | Dickinson Buffer Park (1635 Willard Ave SW, GR 49507) - *GVSU is providing FREE transportation from Allendale Campus to Dickinson Park and lunch/water for students, faculty, and staff who participate.* [Community Event RSVP](#)

June 20, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM | From Roots to Rise: GVSU Community Juneteenth Celebration | Haas Center for Performing Arts Lobby, Valley Campus. [From Roots to Rise RSVP](#)



Pride is for everyone. It's a celebration of the collective values of love, authenticity, respect, and belonging that we share. Whether you identify with the LGBTQIA+ community or are a proud ally, your presence, support, and participation matters.

GVSU Reel Pride: Join us for an outdoor movie night featuring the cult classic *But I'm a Cheerleader!* Bring friends, a chair/blanket, and allyship for an evening of fun, film and community. The first 50 people to register will receive a GVSU Reel Pride t-shirt!

When: June 26, beginning at 4 p.m.

Where: GVSU Soccer Field, Valley Campus

[Reel Pride RSVP](#)

This movie is rated R. There is strong language and issues of sexuality are addressed.

University Governance

[CECI University Committees](#)

[Representation Slidedeck](#)

[Representation List](#)

[Winter 2025 Election Results](#)

College Governance

Winter 2025 Election Results

IMPORTANT DATES!



June 16 - 1st 6 Weeks Classes End

June 17-18 - Examinations - 1st 6 Weeks

June 23 - Grades Due 1st 6 Weeks by 12:00 PM / 2nd 6 Weeks Classes Begin

June 30 - **GVSU Fiscal Year Ends**

July 4 - Independence Day Recess - **GVSU CLOSED**

July 11 - [GVSU Board of Trustees Annual Meeting](#) | 11:00 AM | Kirkhof or Zoom

August 1 - 2nd 6 and 12 Weeks Classes End

August 4-5 - Examinations - 2nd 6 and 12 Weeks

August 11 - Grades Due 2nd 6 and 12 Weeks by 12:00 PM

August 6 - [New Faculty Orientation](#) (Full-Time Faculty only) | 8:30 AM | Eberhard Center

August 7 - [New Faculty Orientation](#) (Full-Time Faculty only) | 8:30 AM | Mary Idema Pew Lib.

August 13 - [New Faculty Orientation](#) (Full-Time Faculty only) | 8:30 AM | Eberhard Center

August 14 - [Pew FTLC Fall Teaching Conference](#) | 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM | Eberhard Center

August 18 - CECI Fall Kick-Off Meeting | Pew Campus

August 20 - GVSU Faculty/Staff Fall Kickoff Celebration | 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Seidman Ctr.

October 2 - [GV Technology Summit](#) | 12:00 PM | DCIH

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.

Resources

[Acronyms](#)

[CECI Connections Guide](#)

[CECI Newsletter Repository](#)

[Experts Guide](#)

[Organizational Chart](#)

[Student Flowchart](#)

Newsletter Contributions

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

Chasity Bailey-Fakhoury, Mary Bair, Lana Burns, Rita Cooper, Jackie Doyon-Martin, Sherie Klee, Lynnea Santoyo, Amy Schelling, Sherril Soman, Victoria Stubbs, Rick Vandermolen, Quincy Williams.

Submit a story for the July edition here!

You may also 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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