



From The Regional Math & Science Program at Grand Valley State University

Fall 2026, Volume 33, Number 3

## News



### New Name, Same Mission

Did you notice anything different in the header? Our name has changed! We are now called The Regional Math & Science Program housed under the Center for Community & Experiential Engagement (CCEE). We are excited to continue connecting students, families, and the community partners with meaningful opportunities for experiential learning!

## TECH Week GR

The Regional Math and Science Program (RMSP) and CCEE participated in Tech Week by connecting students and the community with engaging, hands-on STEM experiences. Through interactive activities and outreach, the RMSP showcased STEM learning and career pathways while highlighting the many ways science, technology, engineering, and mathematics shape our everyday lives.



## K-12 Opportunities

### Julia Robinson Math Festival

Lauren Keough from GVSU would like to host a Julia Robinson Math Festival (JRMF) for your students and their families!

**What's JRMF?** A celebration of math! More specifically, we'll set up collection of interactive puzzles at different tables. Students and families are free to move between tables to engage with each other and with mathematics. All puzzles are designed to be low floor and high ceiling so that people of all ages can find something for them.

**Why?** As you know, lots of people have the wrong idea about math. For Lauren, math is a joyful experience done in community, and she's on a mission to bring that experience to as many people as possible. A JRMF can expand participants ideas of what mathematics is, and know that their mathematical ideas are interesting and valued.

**How?** Lauren is volunteering to do the organization for the event! She can gather volunteers, or she'd love to have you volunteer. She'd also love you to be a participant!

**When?** Flexible on timing! It could be an evening or a Saturday, or even during the school day.

**Does this really work?** In 2026, I hosted successful festivals for 60+ incarcerated people at the Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility and incoming Oliver Wilson Scholars at GVSU. In my experience so far, participants have all been engaged and reported having fun!

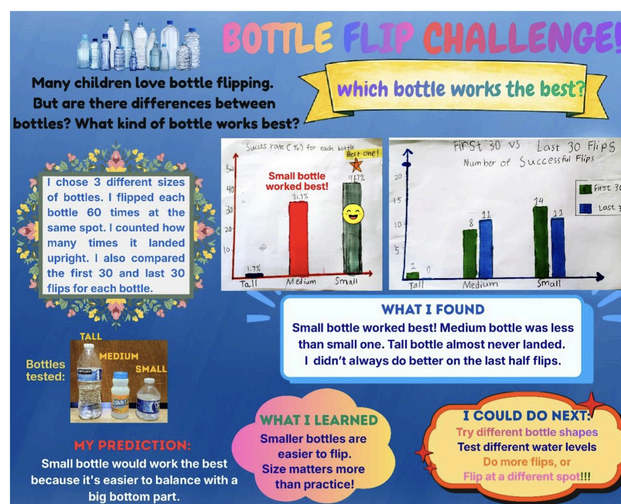
Get in touch: If you want to know more, contact Lauren at [KeouLaur@gvsu.edu](mailto:KeouLaur@gvsu.edu)!

Learn more at <https://jrmf.org/puzzles/>

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

# Michigan Statistics Poster Competition Is Back For 2027!

The Department of Statistics at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), the Regional Math and Science Center at GVSU, and the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics are pleased to announce the [2027 Michigan Statistics Poster Competition](#) for K–12 students.



A statistics poster tells the story of a data set using numbers, graphs, and written explanations. Resources to help students and teachers participate—including articles explaining the poster process, sample lesson plans, standards alignments, videos, and examples of past winning posters—are available on the [competition website](#).

All Michigan students in grades K–12 are eligible to participate. Entries will be judged in four grade-level categories:

- K–3
- 4–6
- 7–9
- 10–12

Students may work individually or in teams. K–3 teams have no size limit and may include an entire class. Teams in grades 4–12 may include up to four students.

There is no entry fee. All posters must be registered through the competition website before submission. Students may submit either a physical poster by mail or drop-off, or an electronic poster by uploading a high-quality image or digitally created file through the online registration system. Guidelines for creating digital posters are available on the competition website.

## Important Dates

**Submission deadline:** March 26, 2027

**Prize winners notified:** May 7, 2027

First-, second-, and third-place winners in each grade category will receive \$144, \$96, and \$72, respectively. Winning schools will receive plaques, and honorable mention certificates will also be awarded. Winning posters will be submitted to the [American Statistical Association's](#) national competition, where they may be eligible for additional prizes.

All submitted posters become the property of the GVSU Department of Statistics.

For more information, contact event organizer Dan Adrian at [adriand1@gvsu.edu](mailto:adriand1@gvsu.edu).

## 2026 NCW Illustrated Poem Contest: "Chemistry Under Construction"

The Western Michigan Local Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) is sponsoring an illustrated poem contest for students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

**Contest Deadline:** October 10th

**Prizes:** \$25 Gift Card

**Contact:** Andrew Lantz at "wmacsoutreach@gmail.com"

Winners of the Western Michigan Local Section's Illustrated Poem Contest will advance to the National Illustrated Poem Contest for a chance to be featured on the ACS website and to win prizes!

Write and illustrate a poem using the NCW theme, "Chemistry Under Construction"

Your poem must be no more than 40 words and in the following styles to be considered:

HAIKU - LIMERICK - ODE - ABC POEM - FREE VERSE - END RHYME - BLANK VERSE

Possible topics related to the theme include:

- Chemical reaction
- Molecules
- Copper
- Polymers
- Adhesive
- Concrete
- Insulation
- Metals

Entries will be judged based upon:

- Artistic Merit - use of color, quality of drawing, design, and layout
- Poem Message - fun, motivational, inspiring about yearly theme
- Originality Creativity - unique, clever and/or creative design
- Neatness - free of spelling and grammatical errors

**Contest Rules:**

- All poems must be no more than 40 words, and in one of the following styles to be considered: Haiku, Limerick, Ode, ABC poem, Free verse, End rhyme, and Blank verse.
- Entries are judged based upon relevance to and incorporation of the NCW theme, word choice and imagery, colorful artwork, adherence to poem style, originality and creativity, and overall presentation.
- All entries must be original works without aid from others. Poems may be submitted by hand on an unlined sheet of paper not larger than 11" by 14" or scanned and sent via email. Illustrations may be created using crayons, watercolors, other types of paint, colored pencils, or markers. The illustration may also be electronically created by using a digital painting and drawing app on a computer, tablet, or mobile device.
- The text of the poem should be easy to read and may be typed before the hand-drawn or digital illustration is added, or the poem may be written on lined paper, which is cut out and pasted onto the unlined paper with the illustration.
- No clipart, AI, or unoriginal images can be used.
- Only one entry per student will be accepted; all entries must include an entry form. If the illustration is created using a digital painting or drawing app, the name of the program must be included on the entry form.
- Acceptance of prizes constitutes consent to use winners' first name, and entry for editorial, advertising, and publicity purposes.
- Do **not** place participant names on the front of your poem

## Teachers! Unlock Your Students Engineering Potential!

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is partnering with the GE Aerospace Foundation to launch Next Engineers Grand Rapids, a global engineering education initiative designed to inspire and prepare students ages 12–18 for future careers in engineering. The program aims to expand access to engineering education, introduce students to diverse engineering careers, and build the skills needed to become tomorrow's problem-solvers and innovators.

Next Engineers Grand Rapids will offer two key programs:

### Engineering Discovery & Engineering Academy

Grand Rapids is one of eight locations worldwide participating in Next Engineers. With funding from the GE Aerospace Foundation and technical support from FHI 360, GVSU will coordinate and deliver the local program, building on its experience in hands-on engineering education, K–12 STEM programming, and community engagement throughout West Michigan.

For more information or to sign your class up contact Liz Montoya at [montoyel@gvsu.edu](mailto:montoyel@gvsu.edu)

## INSPIRING the next generation OF ENGINEERS

**Academy Program at a Glance:** Over two years, students accepted into the program learn to think and act like engineers to prepare to advance to post-secondary education. Sophomores apply and graduate their senior year.

**What it involves:** Over 180 hours outside of school, immersive design challenges, career coaching and employability skills workshops led by seasoned STEM facilitators on GVSU's city campus.

Apply now for consideration in the inaugural cohort!  
Applications are due January 29, 2027, program begins May 2027. All program dates are listed on the application.

Questions? Contact Liz Montoya, Next Engineers Program Manager [montoyel@gvsu.edu](mailto:montoyel@gvsu.edu) for additional info.



SEYMOUR AND ESTHER PADNOS  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

## INSPIRING the next generation OF ENGINEERS

8<sup>th</sup>  
Graders

**Discovery Program at a Glance:** Next Engineers (NE) focuses on equity in STEM. NE Grand Rapids hopes to engage thousands of 8th graders through the Discovery program.

**What it involves:** Opening your doors to an 8th grade STEM classroom for two class periods with the same students. You choose the date(s).

**What happens:** A GVSU facilitator leads a fun, 45- to 90-minute hands-on session exploring engineering concepts, careers, and design challenges, with GE Aerospace volunteers to support. Returning a second time builds on the first experience with the same students.

**Want to learn more?** Contact Liz Montoya, Next Engineers Program Manager [montoyel@gvsu.edu](mailto:montoyel@gvsu.edu) to sign up your class!



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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

## Fall Events

### TECH Week: Grand Rapids

Sept 14th-19th



### Events & More Information

As an unconference, Tech Week is participant-driven. That means that the events, discussions, demos, and showcases are led by the people who live and work in our community. This is your chance to mingle with like-minded people — from our region and across the country — face-to-face, to exchange ideas, network, pick up new information and ultimately help move the conversation forward.

Learn More at [techweekgr.com](http://techweekgr.com)



## Chemistry At The Museum! Free Event In Muskegon

Join the Western Michigan Local Section of the American Chemical Society for a free community event for National Chemistry Week to celebrate the importance of chemistry in everyday life! Learn about this year's theme, **Chemistry Under Construction**, with fun hands-on activities!

At this year's Chemistry at the Museum event, visitors can tour the museum for free, visit activity tables relating to the chemistry of construction, and also watch a chemistry demo show!

**When:** Saturday, October 10th, 11am – 3pm

**Where:** Lakeshore Museum, 430 W Clay Ave, Muskegon, MI

Questions about the event, please contact Andrew Lantz at [wmacsoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:wmacsoutreach@gmail.com)

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## Join us at the 74th Annual MSTA Conference

Science: Built on Community! Participate in workshops, learn from keynote speakers, network, and visit exhibitors and sponsors. There will be special features like field trips, an awards dinner, and multiple session tracks for science educators. Call for proposals now open! All educators Pre-K through college are encouraged to attend! Each educator can receive SCECH credit for continuing education hours for an additional \$25 fee.

Conference and hotel information can be found on our website. [Register today!](#)

**Date:** March 5th & 6th

**Location:**

Radisson Hotel

Downtown Kalamazoo

100 W. Michigan Ave.

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Questions? Lisa Keefer [office@msta-mich.org](mailto:office@msta-mich.org)

## FIRST Robotics at GVSU

The [Padnos College of Engineering \(PCE\)](#) at Grand Valley State University prepares the next generation of engineers, designers, and problem solvers. Through [PCE Outreach](#), we connect with K–12 students and educators across West Michigan to make engineering approachable, engaging, and accessible.

FIRST Robotics is a big part of that work. GVSU hosts a high school FRC practice field and the West Michigan District Event, and this fall we are expanding our FIRST involvement by welcoming middle school students participating in FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) to the Innovation and Design Center.

Our next FRC appearance will be at Allendale High School as we support young women in robotics and STEM. Stop by our table and say hello!

September 26 | Grand Rapids Girls Robotics Competition

 Allendale High School

 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

### Bring GVSU Engineering Into Your Classroom!

We want to hear from you! [Complete our short interest form](#) to share your interests and help us identify ways PCE and our students can support your classroom.

# For GVSU Students

## RealTalk: Humanities Edition

Thursday, October 8th 2026

### A Career-Building Workshop

Join us on Thursday for Real Talk: Humanities Edition. This is a great opportunity for students to meet GVSU alumni and career professionals from their major to gain inside information on career paths, resume and interviewing tips, networking, and more. Dinner, refreshments, and dessert will be provided to attendees.

**REAL TALK:  
HUMANITIES EDITION**  
A CAREER-BUILDING  
WORKSHOP

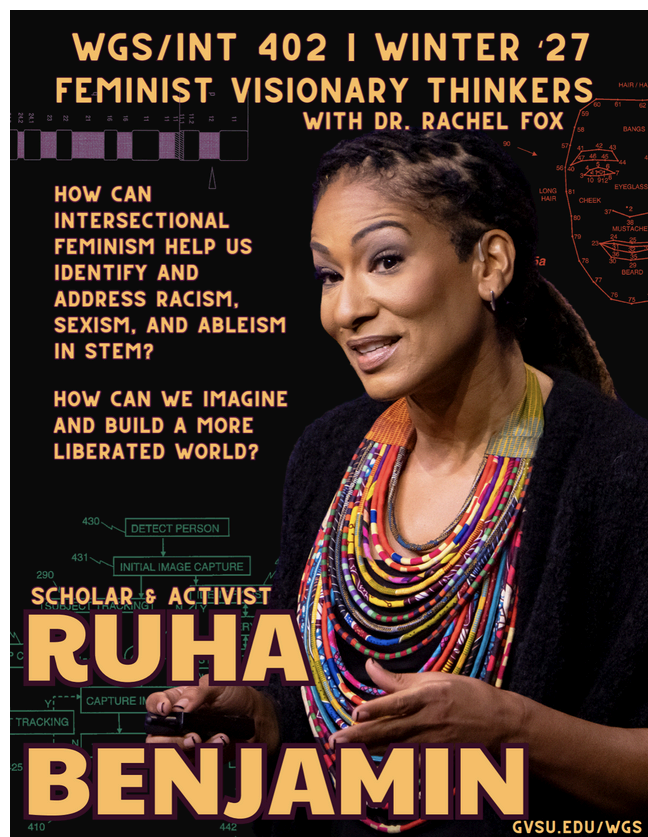
Please help us spread the word to students that may be interested!

**Time:** 4:00pm-6:00pm

**Location:** Kirkof Center, Room 2204 Pere Marquette, Allendale Campus

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## Check Out These Class Offerings For Winter 27'



Click the title of the course you are interested in to get the course description!

| Fall 2026                                                            | Winter 2027                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">WGS 101: Intro to Gender Studies</a><br>(8 sections)     | <a href="#">WGS 101: Intro to Gender Studies</a><br>(7 sections)     |
| <a href="#">WGS 201: Foundations of Feminism</a>                     | <a href="#">WGS 201: Foundations of Feminism</a>                     |
| <a href="#">WGS 224: Intro to LGBTQ Studies</a><br>(4 sections)      | <a href="#">WGS 224: Intro to LGBTQ Studies</a><br>(3 sections)      |
| <a href="#">WGS 255: Gender and Popular Culture</a><br>(10 sections) | <a href="#">WGS 255: Gender and Popular Culture</a><br>(7 sections)  |
| <a href="#">WGS 310: LGBTQ Rights and the Law</a>                    | <a href="#">WGS 301: Global Feminisms</a>                            |
| <a href="#">WGS 335: Women, Health, and the Environment</a>          | <a href="#">WGS 335: Women, Health, and the Environment</a>          |
| <a href="#">WGS 352: Black Women's Community and Culture</a>         | <a href="#">WGS 343: Black Feminist Thought</a>                      |
| <a href="#">WGS 365: Queer Theory</a>                                | <a href="#">WGS/ENG: Lesbian, Gay, and Queer Literature</a>          |
| <a href="#">WGS 395: Women and Gender Studies Research Methods</a>   | <a href="#">WGS 402: Feminist Visionary Thinkers</a> - Ruha Benjamin |
| <a href="#">WGS 491: Contemporary Theory and Practicum</a>           | <a href="#">WGS 495: Capstone</a>                                    |

| Summer 2026                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">WGS 101: Introduction to Gender Studies</a> (2 Sections) |
| <a href="#">WGS 224: Intro to LGBTQ Studies</a>                      |
| <a href="#">WGS 255: Gender and Popular Culture</a> (2 sections)     |

## Classroom Resources

### Need a Quick Lesson?

### Try Our Favorite Dear Data Activity!

Looking for a creative, low-prep activity that gets students talking, creating, and thinking about data? Try Dear Data!

Students create a “data selfie” using fun prompts such as, “Do you sing in the shower?” They then create a visual snapshot of their responses and interview classmates about their creations. The prompts are interchangeable (see what we did there?) and can easily be adapted to fit your classroom, students, or content.

This activity puts the Art in STEAM while introducing foundational skills connected to statistics, geometry, data visualization, and more.

We love using Dear Data as a creative and painless icebreaker that students and staff actually enjoy! Best of all, we always leave having learned something new about one another.

### Access the Date Selfie Activity Here:

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

[Check out the Dear Data activity from TED Ideas](#)

Materials Needed:

- Projector
- Paper for each student (square paper works best)
- Markers

If you try it with your students, let us know how it goes! Our friends in GVSU's Department of Digital Studies are leading a [Dear Data](#)

campaign and love seeing Dear Data in the wild, especially when students create their own postcards. If you're interested in additional questions, lesson ideas, or ways to get your class involved, feel free to reach out to them!

Courtesy of GVSU [Padnos College of Engineering](#).



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## Frontiers for Young Minds: A Resource for mid-grades Science Teaching

[Frontiers for Young Minds](#) is an open-access science journal for kids, by kids." Articles in various fields focus on global problems, written for the 8 - 15 age group. Article reviewers are of the same age to involve students in the process of evaluating articles. Student involvement insures narratives are written at middle K-12 levels. The goal is to provide science access that is understandable and impactful. Narratives explain Technical terms are explained and illustrated. Authors highlight ends of articles with briefs as to their interests in science.

Our research team has contributed three articles:

Rangel-Buitrago, N., Gracia C., A., Galgani, F., and Neal, W.J., 2026, [Sandbags on the Beach: A Quick Help, Long Term Trouble](#). Frontiers for Young Minds v. 14, 1609699.

Rangel-Buitrago, N., and Neal, W., 2024, [Sand Mining on Our Coasts Leaves No Sand for Sandcastles](#). Frontiers for Young Minds, v. 12, 1409741.

Rangel-Buitrago, N., Neal, W., and Nicoll, K., 2023, [Is Earth in a New Time Period: The Plasticene?](#) Frontiers for Young Minds, v. 11, Article 1210561.

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## Thank You for Supporting the [InterChange!](#)

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