

The Kutsche Chronicle

Kutsche Office of Local History is part of the Brooks College of
Interdisciplinary Studies at Grand Valley State University

www.gvsu.edu/kutsche
Fall 2016



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I'm very excited to serve as the Kutsche Office of Local History's director. During this summer, I had the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Melanie Shell-Weiss as we underwent the leadership transition. Part of this work included participating in the Oceana County Community History Harvest in June.



It was a pleasure to get to know the local community and witness the digitization of artifacts, papers, and memorabilia and participate in the oral history collection.

Additionally, I spent the summer and fall months meeting with various individuals and community partners. I look forward to getting to know all of you as I continue in this role.

To give you a sense of who I am, I am sharing the three core values that inform my vision for the Kutsche Office:

1. Commitment to supporting community partners based on their interests and investments in order to strengthen their existing work and values.
2. Amplify the voices of diverse communities in order to honor the lived experiences of underrepresented groups to ensure they tell their stories.
3. Cultivate and engage in honest, thoughtful discussions and exchange of new ideas and perspectives through programming that accurately reflects who members of the greater West Michigan community are and how their life stories intersect with the lives of the GVSU community.

Since its inception, the Kutsche Office of Local History has developed a strong reputation and focus that unearths and highlights the voices of diverse communities in West Michigan. It is my goal to continue this impactful work. I look forward to seeing you at events throughout the year.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, flowing 'R' followed by a horizontal line.

Upcoming Events....

*October 18, 2016, 3:45-6:45pm—
Nuestra Comunidad collection at
Holland Meijer Campus*

*October 26, 2016, 1:00-2:30pm—
Lunch with the Kutsche Office*

*October 26, 2016, 3:00-4:15pm—
Oral History Workshop, Mary Idema
Pew Library, Multipurpose Room*

*November 5, 2016, 10am-12pm—
Nuestra Comunidad collection at
Herrick District Library*

*March 23, 2017—8th Annual Local
History Roundtable, Mary Idema Pew
Library, Multipurpose Room*

*February 3-17, 2017 Histories of
Student Activism exhibit, Mary Idema
Pew Library*



Gi-gikinomaage-min Project Update

By Lin Bardwell, Special Projects Graduate Assistant and Gi-gikinnomaage-min Project Coordinator

Boozhoo (Hello in Anishininaabemowin). This has been an exciting year for the Gi-gikinomaage-min Oral History project and an even more exciting one is planned for the academic year 2016-2017. We brought our "Walking Beyond Our Ancestors' Foot Steps" traveling exhibit to a close with a wonderful event that took place at the Grand Rapids Public Museum on May 17th. Wagner Wheeler, former executive director for the Grand

Rapids Intertribal Council, and June Mamawgona-Fletcher, former GVSU TRiO advisor, shared their urban experience with Levi Rickert and I. In addition being hosted at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, the traveling exhibit began at the Mary Idema Pew Library during the month of November before heading to the Grand Rapids Public Library. Photos of the event and exhibit can be found on our website.

We begin this academic year with the formal creation of an Advisory Council that will manage and direct the project as we move forward. Simone Jonaitis and Levi Rickert, members of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, respectively, serve as Chair and Vice Chair. The project appreciates their willingness to serve in this capacity and would like to thank the other members who give of their time and creativity towards this project.

To learn more about the Gi-gikinomaage-min Project, please check out our new website: **www.gvsu.edu/nativeamericangr/**.

We are actively planning events and this is a great place to learn about how to be involved.

There you will find information regarding our goals and objectives, a full list of our Advisory Council members, photos, and more. We encourage all to visit our website and stay informed of our progress.



Wagner Wheeler being interviewed by Mariano Avila (WGVU) on May 17, 2016 at Grand Rapids Public Museum.

Photo credit: Kristina Bird, Adam Bird Photography

Getting it Right: The Best (and Worst) Practices of Oral History

Wednesday, October 26, 2016 @ 3:00-4:15pm

Mary Idema Pew Library and Information Commons, Multi-purpose room

Oral history is a method that preserves the voices and memories of individuals from family members and community members to leaders of organizations and members of political or social movements.

This workshop will discuss the importance and value of oral histories as method and examine (un)successful practices in conducting oral histories.

Dr. James Smither, Professor of History at GVSU, and Director of the GVSU Veterans History Project will facilitate the workshop.

To RSVP: www.gvsu.edu/kutsche_under_events.



GVSU student and Kutsche Office intern, Kassie O'Brien (left), interviews 8th graders at Shelby Middle School as part of the NEH-funded "Growing Community" Project, April 27, 2016, Shelby, Michigan. Photo by Bri Luginbill.

Histories of Student Activism at GVSU

The Histories of Student Activism at GVSU highlights and examines the past and present organizing work conducted by graduate and undergraduate students at Grand Valley State University since its founding. This project documents the organizing work of students from underrepresented groups throughout the university's history. Consequently, this research traces the genealogy of contemporary examples of activism on campus to their predecessors. As campuses across the nation become involved in movements, a new student-activist has emerged. Activism has become part of the university experience for students committed to social justice, which is why this project historicizes campus activism to broader events occurring across the U.S.

The initial phase of this project launched in Fall 2016. Focused on archival research, we are working with University Special Collections and Archives as we review news articles, posters, photographs, correspondence, among other materials to better understand the various issues that sparked student engagement. We are paying careful attention to how student organizations and student leaders discussed their work as well as how faculty, staff, and administration characterized student activism.

If you're interested in learning more about the project or getting involved, please email Kutsche@gvsu.edu.

Andrew Collier Undergraduate Research Assistant, Student Activism Project

Andrew is a 5th year student at Grand Valley, majoring in Women, Gender, and Sexuality studies. He uses he/him/his pronouns and loves a good cup of coffee, an interesting book, and Macaroni and Cheese. Andrew is passionate about sexual health awareness, queer rights, and hidden history.





Making History in Oceana County

by Nora Salas, Assistant Professor of History at GVSU

As a historian I rely on sources collected and created by librarians, media outlets, government agencies, community groups and everyday individuals. Projects like Growing Community: Oceana

County's Agricultural History are critical for historians as their work may be limited by the availability of sources. This challenge is often greater when examining the lives of "ordinary" people or people who have been excluded from history in the past. Supported by a Common Heritage grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Growing Community project is a collaboration between El Centro Hispano de Oceana, the Oceana Historical and Genealogical Society, and the Kutsche Office. The project aims to tell the history of the people who have lived and worked in Oceana County, Michigan.



Fidencio Vasquez, Jr. holding a newspaper clipping about his family in that was published in the Muskegon Chronicle. Hart Community Room, Hart, Michigan, June 18, 2016. Photo by Bri Luginbill.

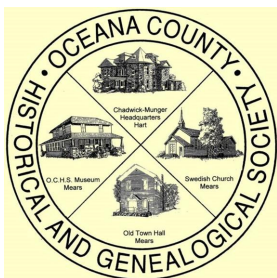


Ralph Dold, left, speaks with GVSU student Kassie O'Brien as part the "Growing Community" Project "History Harvest." Hart Community Center, Hart, Michigan, June 18, 2016. Photo by Bri Luginbill.

On June 18, we held a Community History Harvest in Hart, MI to collect oral histories as well as digital copies of photos, news clippings, letters, journals, and other documents from community members. The day-long event provided the people of Oceana County with a forum to participate in defining their own history. To date, project participants have collected 35 oral histories, 720 new photos, and more than 5,000 scanned images. This is a significant contribution to the history of Oceana County and rural Michigan.

Do you know someone with a connection to Oceana County? Do you want to make history? With our community partners El Centro Hispano de Oceana and the Oceana Historical and Genealogical Society we are still collecting oral histories and materials through the end of this year.

Please contact us if you would like to participate.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities



Local History Roundtable

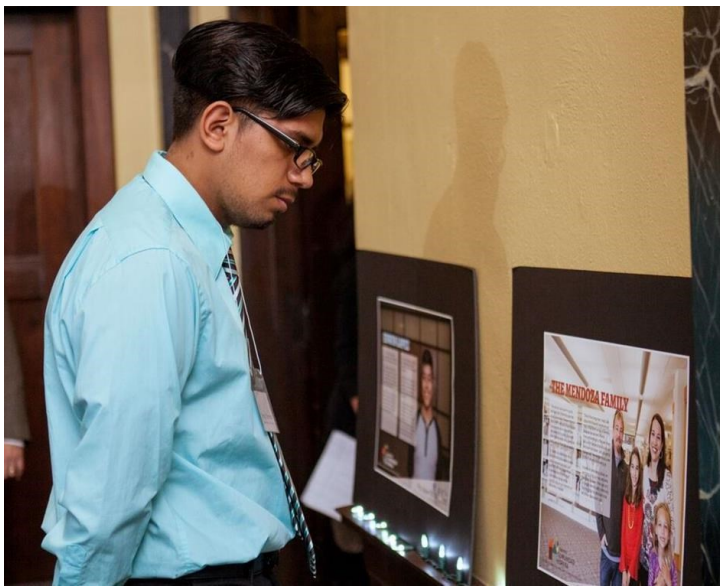
Join us for our Annual Local History Roundtable on March 23, 2017. This year's theme "Reconstructing Home" examines the history of diverse communities coming to and settling in West Michigan from the earliest settlers to newcomers. We will explore the reasons that spurred these families to come to the region. We also will discuss how these individuals and communities reconstructed traditions of home upon arrival, considering the roles of assimilation and cultural preservation in this process. We are looking forward to vibrant day-long conversations on historical and contemporary examples of how place becomes home.

Past Roundtables

- 2016 ("**Changing Communities**"): Held at GVSU's Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons, featured speakers included Todd Robinson, author of *City Within a City: The Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids, Michigan*, and Tim Gleisner, Assistant Director at Herrick District Library, formerly at GRPL.
- 2015 ("**Food, Farm, and Table**"): Held at the Grand Rapids Public Library, featured speakers included Hank Meijer (Meijer, Inc.) and Ellen Messer (Tufts University).
- 2014 ("**Immigration and Civil Rights**"): Held at the Holland Museum, featured speakers included Bing Goei (State of Michigan) and Nora Salas (GVSU)
- 2013 ("**Natives, Settlers, and Founders: Our Shared Community History**"): Held at the Grand Haven Community Center, featured speakers included Eric Hemenway (LTBB), Wallace Ewing, and Marjie Viveen
- 2012 ("**Transportation and Waterways**"): Held at the Annis Water Institute in Muskegon, featured speakers included Kevin Finney (Jijak Foundation), Carl Bajema (GVSU), Daniel Yakes (MCC), Christine Byron (GRPL), and Tom Wilson
- 2011 ("**Meaning of the 150th Civil War Commemoration**"): Held on GVSU's Allendale campus
- 2010— General Meeting held on GVSU's Allendale campus



From top right: Bing Goei (State of Michigan), Tim Gleisner (Herrick District Library) and Todd Robinson (UNLV), Dr. Paul Kutsche and members of Oceana Hispanic Center, Delia Fernandez (MSU), and Hank Meijer (Meijer, Inc.)



Jorge Puga, an officer in GVSU's Latino Student Union, viewing the Nuestra Comunidad exhibit at LAUP's annual dinner and fundraiser. Midtown Center (Holland, Michigan), November 6, 2015. Photo by Bri Luginbill.

Kutsche Office Announces Community Collaboration Grant

The Community Collaboration grant program is designed to provide meaningful opportunities for faculty working with students and communities in West Michigan. The program focuses on engaging faculty in the humanities and social sciences working with a community partner and mentoring a student on celebrating, documenting, and preserving the voices of West Michigan's diverse communities. Mentored research opportunities facilitate students' ability to experience the transformative nature of research, as well as develop professional skills.

For more information about this grant and how to apply, contact the Kutsche Office of Local History at 616-331-8099 or kutsche@gvsu.edu.

Nuestra Comunidad Hispana 2.0

The "Nuestra Comunidad Hispana" Project team includes The City of Holland, Herrick District Library, Grand Valley State University's Meijer Campus in Holland (GVSU), Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP), Holland Museum, St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish, and Grand Valley State University's Kutsche Office of Local History.

The purpose of this project is to document the untold stories of Hispanic Holland, bring together the region's diverse and multi-generational Hispanic communities, and work towards envisioning the future of our shared community.

Copies of participants' photographs and oral histories will be permanently housed in the collections of the Herrick District Library where it will be made available for use by researchers and the public.

A Heritage Grant from the Michigan Humanities Council makes this project possible. The Kutsche Office of Local History serves as an advisor to the project.



Newcomer Legacy: Vietnamese American Impact

This project examines the legacy of Vietnamese refugees in West Michigan. Although numerically large, the Vietnamese community is often underrepresented on the regional radar, and the group is not one for tooting its own horn. Arriving in three distinct waves over the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, Vietnamese refugees have, nevertheless, left their mark on the social and business climate of the community. The project focuses on interviews with local Vietnamese refugees about their jarring arrival in the region, their challenges to fit in, and their adaptation to a new culture. The interviews will be distilled to a short documentary, which will be screened in 2017 at local venues. If schools or civic organizations wish to obtain a copy of the DVD or to host a screening, they should contact Project Manager Alan Headbloom at 616-666-5676.

A Heritage Grant from the Michigan Humanities Council makes this project possible. The Kutsche Office of Local History serves as an advisor to the project.

Gordon Olson Award: Recognizing Outstanding Contributions to Local History



Do you know someone who has made outstanding contributions to local history? Someone who has used history to give voice to diverse communities? Please consider nominating them for the Kutsche Office of Local History's 2017 Gordon Olson Award. Nominations will be accepted through February 19, 2017. Visit www.gvsu.edu/kutsche to nominate.

Established in 2014, the Gordon Olson Award will be given to one individual each year. Named in honor of Gordon Olson, former Grand Rapids City Historian, whose books, leadership, programming, mentorship, and advocacy have inspired generations of West Michigan residents, the award is intended to recognize individuals whose work embodies the Kutsche Office's mission, "Using history to give voice to diverse communities." The award is announced at the Annual Local History Roundtable. This year's Roundtable will take place March 23, 2017 in GVSU's Mary Idema Pew Library on the Allendale Campus.

Lunch with the Kutsche Office of Local History

Wednesday, October 26, 2016

@ 1:00-2:30pm

Mary Idema Pew Library and Information
Commons, Multi-purpose room

Come meet our new director, Dr. Kim McKee, and learn about her ideas for collaboration and vision for the office.

Spend time talking with others in West Michigan about local history. A great opportunity to network and connect this fall.

RSVP: Please respond by:

Monday, October 17

kutsche@gvsu.edu

616-331-8099



Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies

Become a friend of the Kutsche Office of Local History....

\$45 Annual Membership (Individual) provides free admission to the annual Roundtable and a one-year subscription to the *Kutsche Chronicle*

\$100 Annual Family/Institutional Membership provides the same benefits, up to four free admissions to one Annual Roundtable plus a one-year subscription to the *Kutsche Chronicle*

\$250 Annual Supporting Partner, includes four free admissions to one annual Roundtable, one-year subscription to the *Kutsche Chronicle*, plus special invitation to Office events throughout the year

\$500 Sustaining Partner, includes four free admissions to the annual Roundtable through 2019, three year subscription to the *Kutsche Chronicle*, plus special invitation to Office events throughout the year

\$1,000 Lifetime Membership, include all benefits listed above for life

To make your gift online, please go to www.gvsu.edu/giving/givenow. Or you may mail a check to:

Grand Valley State University, Kutsche Office of Local History
PO Box 2005, Grand Rapids MI 49501-2005