

The Kutsche Chronicle

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“Food, Farm, and Table”: 6th Annual Local History Roundtable

Over 120 people gathered in the Grand Rapids Public Library’s Ryerson Auditorium for the 2015 Local History Roundtable. The meeting was held on Thursday, March 26. This year’s theme focused on the diverse history of food production and distribution in West Michigan.

Hank Meijer, co-chairman of Meijer Inc., opened the meeting. His talk, “It Began With An Old Truck and Self-Serve Baskets’: Meijer’s Experiences Purveying Groceries, Local and Large” was followed by a lively question and answer session with the audience.

Ellen Messer, faculty in the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, provided the afternoon keynote, uniting themes from across the day. Her talk was called “Local to Global Food Values: Policy, Practice, and Performance.”

Other highlights from the day included panels discussion on “Food and Place-Making in Grand Rapids” and “Documenting the Agricultural History of Oceana County.” Attendees praised the wide range of interests and perspectives shared at the meeting. An evening business meeting for staff from local museums, libraries/archives, and historical societies/commissions rounded out the day.

Kutsche Office of Local History Membership

The Kutsche Office of Local History is home to the Local History Roundtable as well as different projects helping local groups and people preserve, protect and retain history that is important to them. This is accomplished through oral histories, supervised internships and fellowships, faculty directed projects and the work of experts in their specific fields.

You can be a part of this exciting initiative by becoming a Friend of the Kutsche Office of Local History by making a gift of \$45. Your gift will allow you discounts to future programs.

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**

You will receive an acknowledgement and receipt for your gift as your gift helps to preserve local history in our communities.



Gi-gikinomaage-min: Defend Our History, Unlock Your Spirit

By Belinda Bardwell, *Gi-gikinomaage-min* Project Coordinator

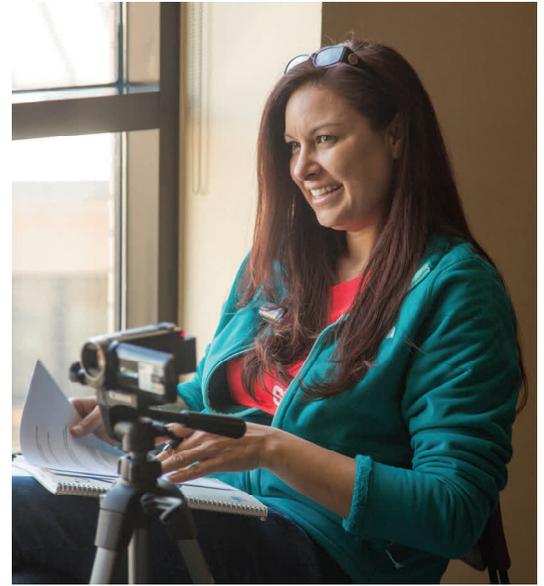
On a sunny and warm afternoon, settled in a room tucked away in the Grand Rapids Public Museum, I was able to have a candid conversation with a significant community elder who grew up in the Grand Rapids area. Chris Marcus-Stone is an artist with many talents. She has offered much of her talents to the youth of the Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS). I have had the pleasure of learning skills of regalia making while working on a community grant through the Native American Education Program at GRPS. She told me many stories, making her lived experience more vivid and real for those of us listening. This is the goal of the *Gi-gikinomaage-min* Project. We hope to preserve the many vibrant stories of our Native American urban community for our future generations. This project will allow our community to tell their own story, their own history. This story only our Native American community has, often goes untold. We want to tell that story.

This work will give a voice to a silenced population. At the same time it allows Native Americans the opportunity to share their real life experiences growing up in a time when their issues were being pushed into public consciousness. It is our intention to engage the local community in the planning and implementation process to insure their ownership and our accountability.



Chris Marcus-Stone

To share your story or get involved with the project, email kutsche@gvsu.edu or call (616)331-8099.



Belinda Bardwell

2nd Annual Gordon Olson Award

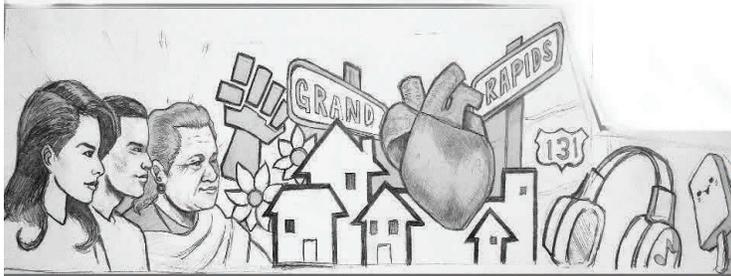


Each year, the Kutsche Office of Local History recognizes outstanding, lifetime contributions to local history that “give voice to diverse communities” by giving the Gordon Olson Award.

This year’s Gordon Olson Award was given to H. Sook Wilkinson. Dr. Wilkinson is a leading expert on international adoption and the author of several books including *Asian Americans in Michigan: Voices from the Midwest*, co-edited with Victor Jew, which was published in March 2015 by Wayne State University Press. That book is among the first, comprehensive histories of Asian Americans in Michigan.

Dr. Wilkinson also has chaired the Governor’s Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs as well as the new Michigan Pacific American Affairs Commission. She also serves on the Board of Trustees for Northern Michigan University.

Finalists for the Olson Award included Cindy Laug and Lori Shusta. Ms. Laug, who works in the Dean’s Office of the GVSU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She was recognized for her pioneering work in Michigan’s women’s history. Ms. Shusta, who works at the Grand Valley American Indian Lodge, was recognized for her advocacy and archival work on behalf of Native Americans across the Great Lakes region.



Youth Leadership Through the Arts

By Samantha Quick

Samantha is a GVSU Liberal Studies major and Kutsche Office intern. Through Winter 2015, she has been working with the Office's Youth Leadership Initiative, a partnership with Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities, that works with young people to document their neighborhood and family histories, teaching academic skills, leadership skills, and promoting college attendance.

Art, music, dance, and history can be vital to young peoples' safety and their futures. Some of my students hate school, but they like art; yet the humanities are disappearing from many public school curricula. Without proper art classes, young people who cannot express themselves in school look to ways of doing it outside of the classroom. This often comes in the form of graffiti, rapping, and other forms of street art. Street art can be a resistance to power; this resistance itself is a form of empowerment.

This year at the Cook Arts Center, we have been using street art methods, with a historical perspective, in a planned space to show teens that there is a place to express themselves. The mural we painting was designed by the teens in the program and draws on research done by the Cook Library Scholars in 2013-2014 to explore themes related to Grand Rapids' Latino past, present, and future. They are learning to paint. And the mural will be a long-term fixture in The Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts.

As a soon-to-be GVSU alum studying art activism, I am proud to be a part of this project. I see the same delight in the eyes of my students. Street art is fun, exciting, and rebellious. Art activism is critical, productive, and honorable. This project is something we can all return to time and time again to remember our journey, our connection to the community, and the hard work we did together each week.

Kutsche Office Staff & Interns (Winter 2015)

Special Projects Graduate Assistant—Jakia Fuller



Jakia Fuller has worked for the Kutsche Office throughout the 2014-2015 academic year, coordinating the Youth Leadership Initiative, assisting with outreach, and helping to build future programs. She holds a BA in Liberal Studies (GVSU '13) and is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Education at GVSU through the College Student Affairs Leadership Program. A native of Muskegon, Jakia is passionate about pipeline to college initiatives and promoting student engagement. In 2013-2014 she worked with AmeriCorps*VISTA at the Jackson College Hillsdale Campus.

Project Coordinator, Gi-kiginomaage-min—Belinda Bardwell



Belinda Bardwell holds a B.S. in Liberal Studies (GVSU '14). She is a member of the Native American community who has served a four-year term as Tribal Councilor for her tribe, The Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and worked for the Native American Education Program for GRPS for eleven years. She currently sits on the GVSU Native American Advisory Board, is a Commissioner for the Grand Rapids' Community Relations Commission, and serves as a board member for the Anishinaabe Circle.

Jane Newton



Jane Newton holds a BA in Public Relations and Advertising (GVSU, '10) and is currently working on her Master's in Communications from GVSU. She currently works at Thermotron Industries in Holland as a marketing coordinator. In her free time, Jane loves to travel, read, binge watch TV shows on Netflix, drink local craft beer, and eat delicious Mexican food.

Sam Quick



Sam Quick is a Liberal Studies major studying social change through technology and art. She is an artist, activist, and nature lover. Born and raised in Grand Rapids she loves the mitten state, and hopes to preserve Michigan's charm and help propel its progress.

Scott St Louis



Scott St. Louis is a junior in the Frederik Meijer Honors College at GVSU, studying history with a double minor in political science and French. He is Vice President for Educational Affairs on the Student Senate, and a Fellow in the Cook Leadership Academy at the Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies. Scott brings a strong interest in public history and archives, which he is nurturing with as much professional experience as possible before commencing graduate study.