

The Kutsche Chronicle

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In this Issue

Nuestra Comunidad Hispana

7th Annual Local History Roundtable

Walking Beyond Our Ancestors' Footsteps

Call for Nominations: Gordon Olson Prize

NEH Common Heritage Grant will support local History Harvest

New Initiative focuses on Asian Pacific American Communities



This past fall, the Kutsche Office of Local History partnered with the City of Holland, Herrick District Library, Latin Americans United for Progress, and St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church to collect nearly 50 oral histories and portraits of Hispanic community members across the greater Holland area.



Called “Nuestra Comunidad Hispana,” the project was launched as part of National Hispanic Heritage Month. The portraits were revealed in a bilingual exhibition that opened on December 7, 2015 at Herrick District Library. Participants were given free copies of their portraits and oral histories to keep. These materials, along with translations and transcriptions are now a permanent archive in Herrick District Library’s Genealogy Department.



Local History Roundtable



Please register now for the 7th Annual Local History Roundtable in GVSU’s Mary Idema Pew Library (Allendale campus) on March 24, 2015.

This year’s theme is “Changing Communities,” and will feature keynote addresses by Professor Todd E. Robinson, author of *A City Within A City: The Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids, Michigan* (Temple University Press, 2012), and Tim Gleisner, Head of Local History and Special Collections at the Grand Rapids Public Library.

This day-long event includes panel discussions and opportunities to network with local historians, librarians/archivists, curators, museum and historical society staff, teachers, students, and community members from across the area.

At 5 p.m. there will be a business meeting for local history professionals.

Register Now to Reserve Your Space! Visit:

www.gvsu.edu/kutsche or phone (616)331-8099

A registration fee of \$25 covers all meals as well as conference materials. Registration is free for members of the Kutsche Office.

Those who register by February 15 will be able to take a guided tour of the Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons. This award-winning building was designed to serve as the intellectual heart of GVSU's Allendale campus.

Special tours of the GVSU Special Collections & University Archives on a limited, first-come, first-served basis to those who are interested.



Walking Beyond our Ancestors' Footsteps



Partners in the *Gi-gikinomaage-min (We are all teachers) Project* worked with a team of GVSU students – Sean Hamilton, Andy Woycik, and Tabitha Gibbs -- to create a traveling exhibition, "Walking Beyond Our Ancestors' Footsteps." The exhibition is the beginning of a series that explores urban Native American history in Grand Rapids over the 20th and 21st centuries.

Unveiled for the first time on November 3, 2015 the exhibition was on display in the Mary Idema Pew Library's Exhibit Hall through Native American Heritage Month. The show contained historic documents and objects made by local Native Americans in the past decade. It also highlighted a small portion of the research conducted by the *Gi-gikinomaage-min Project* to date.

Many collaborators worked with the Kutsche Office to bring this exhibition to fruition including the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids Public Library, GVSU's Native American Advisory Board, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and Special Collections & University Archives. Among these planners was Native News Online's editor-in-chief Levi Rickert, a tribal citizen of the Prairie Band Potawatomi.

"The exhibit is truly a collaborative effort of the whole community that Grand Rapids can take considerable pride," Rickert said. "It shows the strength and resiliency of our local Native community that can trace our ancestry back hundreds of years to where Grand Valley's Allendale campus is today."

"Walking Beyond Our Ancestors' Footsteps" will be on display through in the Local History Department of the Grand Rapids Public Library from January 4-24, 2016.



Gordon Olson Award: Recognizing Outstanding Contributions to Local History



Gordon Olson Award
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 2016 Gordon Olson Award. Nominations will be accepted through February 19, 2016. 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 24, 2016 in GVSU's Mary Idema Pew Library on the Allendale Campus. Recipients are given a commemorative plaque and are recognized through Kutsche Office publicity and local news media.



New Initiative focuses on Asian Pacific Americans in West Michigan

Beginning in January 2016, the Kutsche Office of Local History is working with several local partners to collect oral histories, stories, memories, and photographs from Asian Pacific Americans in West Michigan.

Asian Pacific Americans, their families, and friends are invited to come to a series of open story and portrait collection dates held throughout the month of January at Herrick District Library, 300 S. River Ave., in Holland, Michigan. A complete list of days and times can be found on the Kutsche Office website (www.gvsu.edu/kutsche).

All participants will be given a copy of their portrait and oral history to keep. These materials will become part of a permanent archive at Herrick District Library and will be unveiled as part of an exhibition in May 2016 as part of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebrations.

We are also working with Grand Rapids Public Library, GVSU's Office of Multicultural Affairs, and GVSU Liberal Studies faculty member Professor Kim McKee, to collect oral histories and portraits from Asian Pacific Americans and their families at GVSU and the greater Grand Rapids area. The first collection opportunity will take place on February 4 in GVSU's Kirkhof Center as part of the Asian New Year Festival.

Please consider sharing your story! For more information or if you are interested in participating, please contact us at (616)331-8099 or kutsche@gvsu.edu. We are always looking for community members and students who are willing to volunteer as interviewers, transcribers, or translators as well.

Kutsche Office awarded an NEH Common Heritage grant to collect histories of migrant families

We are very pleased to be one of three Michigan sites that were awarded a Common Heritage grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities for 2016. The Common Heritage program supports both the digitization of cultural heritage materials and the organization of public programming at community events that explore these materials as a window on a community's history and culture.

Our project, called "Growing Community: A Century of Migration in Oceana County" focuses on collecting materials that tell the history of migrant farm families in Hart, Shelby, and Walkerville. Several public programs and a day-long "History Harvest" event are planned for summer and fall. This effort is a collaboration among GVSU, the Oceana County Hispanic Center, and the Oceana County Historical and Genealogical Society. GVSU faculty members Andy Schlewitz (Political Science and Latin American Studies) and Nora Salas (History) will help lead this project.

Other Michigan sites to receive a Common Heritage award include ACCESS (on behalf of the Arab American National Museum) in Dearborn and Marquette County Historical Museum (for an effort to document the Finish American legacy in Michigan's Upper Peninsula).



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