

OCTOBER 2025 | REFLECTS FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

The Economic Impact of Grand Valley State University





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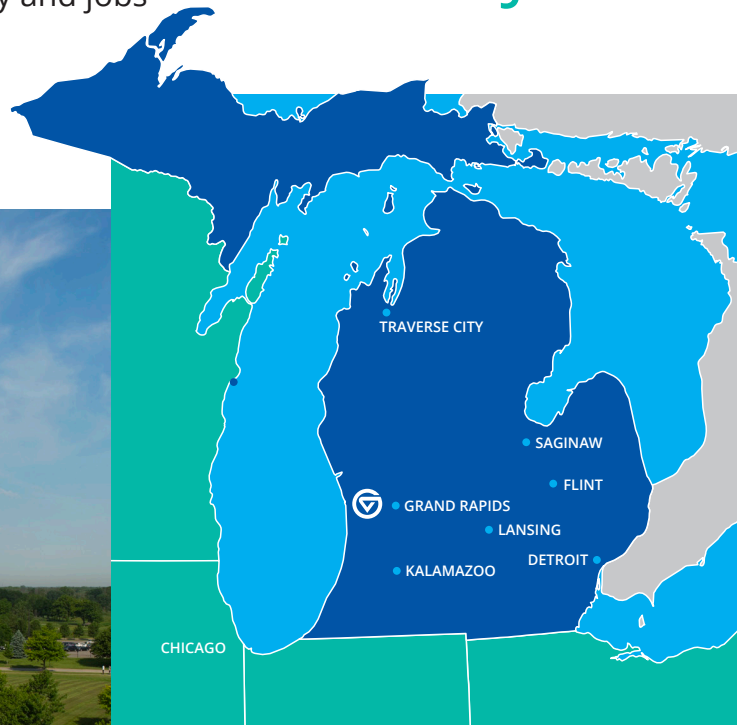
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Grand Valley State University's (GVSU) economic impact in Michigan exceeds \$3 billion. This total impact represents economic activity supported by the university through its operations, student spending, and alumni contributions.

GVSU sustained over 116,000 jobs, including 98,880 GVSU alumni living and working in Michigan and approximately 17,297 jobs supported across the state. This employment impact includes jobs within the university and jobs created through its broader economic influence in Michigan communities.

\$3B
OUTPUT

116K
JOBS



GVSU ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

REFLECTS FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

Report Published: OCTOBER 2025



\$3 BILLION
ANNUAL IMPACT



116,000+
JOBS SUSTAINED



\$7.6 BILLION
ALUMNI WAGES

IMPACT BREAKDOWN

- Payroll, research, and operations spending: **\$910.8M**
- Spending by GVSU students attracted to or retained in the state: **\$308.1M**
- Construction spending **\$32.7M** annually + **\$187M** project planned for 2026
- Estimated incremental alumni earnings: **\$1.8B**
- **116k jobs** sustained includes **98,880 GVSU alumni** living and working in Michigan plus **17,297 jobs** supported by the activities of GVSU and its students.

ABOUT GVSU IN 2024

- **22,269** students
- **5,183** graduates
- **145,000+** alumni
- **2,607** employees
- **86%** of alumni stay and work in Michigan

RETURN ON INVESTMENT



31:1

For every \$1 invested by taxpayers into GVSU, \$31 in income is generated for Michigan

#1 FOR TALENT RETENTION IN MICHIGAN

MOST EFFICIENT WITH STATE FUNDS

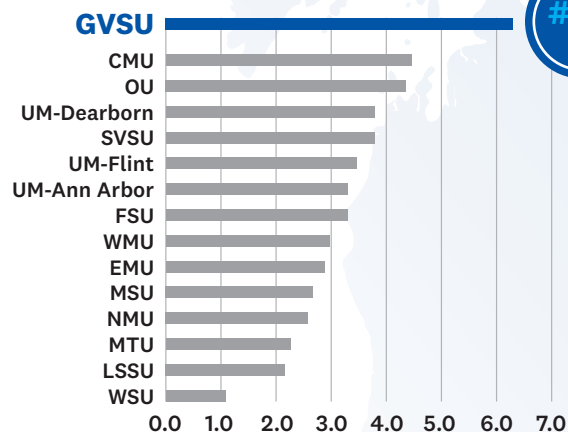
TOP 1% FOR TALENT RETENTION IN U.S.

Top 1% of 2,000 public institutions in U.S. for talent retained in the state.

Per \$100K spent by state

US	1.5 graduates stay in-state
MI	2.5 graduates stay in MI
GVSU	4.9 graduates stay in MI

Graduates per \$100,000 in state funding invested

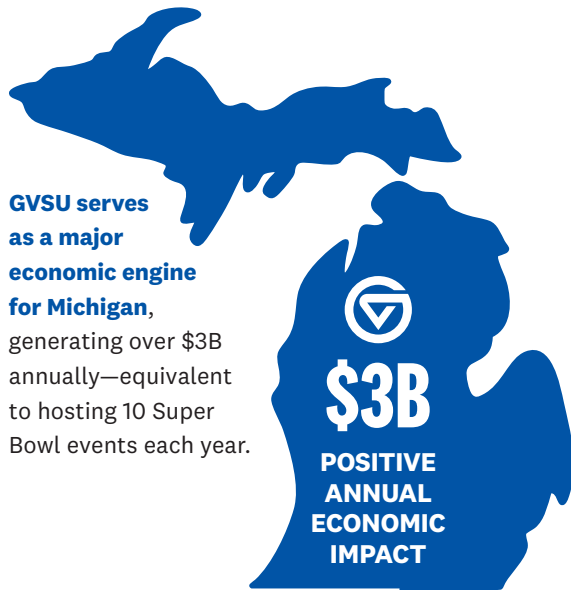


Sources: GVSU Annual Economic Report and Upjohn Institute.



gvsu.edu/economic-impact

THE VALUE OF GVSU TO MICHIGAN'S ECONOMY



100X
GROWTH IN
60 YEARS

From **224** students in 1963 to **22,269** students in 2024

While higher education enrollment nationally fell 15% in the past decade, GVSU's growth is steady and stabilized.

\$1.4

MILLION MORE EARNINGS

On average, GVSU grads earn \$27,600 more per year than peers with a high school diploma, adding up to \$1.4 million more over a lifetime.

REDUCING LOAN DEBT

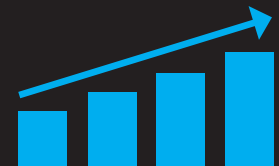
2023-2024
44%
GVSU GRADUATES HAD NO DEBT

GVSU
\$24,500

NATIONAL AVERAGE
\$35,530

1/3 LOWER DEBT THAN NATIONAL AVERAGE

20%
20% RISE IN LOAN-FREE LAKERS IN LAST 10 YEARS



Source: U.S. Dept. of Education College Scorecard, undergraduate debt load data.

1 IN 20

JOBS IN MI

Nearly 100,000 GVSU alumni power Michigan's workforce – 1 in 20 of all college-educated jobs statewide.

GVSU GENERATES

\$369M

IN TAX REVENUE ANNUALLY

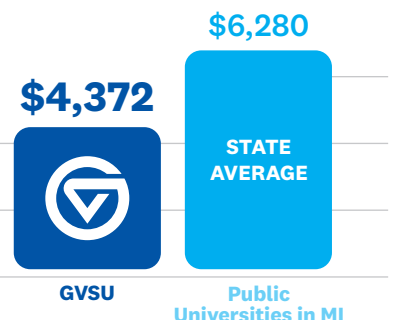
\$101 million in state tax revenue
\$18 million in local tax revenue
\$250 million in federal tax revenue

GVSU DELIVERS GREATER VALUE

31:1 ROI

ON TAXPAYER INVESTMENT

Each year, GVSU receives **\$2,000 less per pupil** in taxpayer dollars than the state average, despite generating outsized 31:1 returns on taxpayer investment.



gvsu.edu/economic-impact

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY



1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 SCOPE OF WORK

To assess the direct and indirect economic contribution and the fiscal impact of Grand Valley State University (GVSU) on both the local region and the state of Michigan. The economic impact refers to the total economic activity generated by GVSU within the defined geographic areas. For the purposes of this report, the local region includes Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Allegan Counties (KOMA). The study will also evaluate GVSU's broader economic impact across the entire state of Michigan.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

For this analysis of GVSU, the annual economic and fiscal impacts were estimated across several categories: student spending, university operations, capital expenditures, research and development activities, athletic department spending, and the lifetime earnings of alumni.

For each category, the following approach was used to estimate economic and fiscal impacts:

- **STUDENT SPENDING:** Estimated average annual expenditures by students (excluding tuition) on housing, food, transportation, and other goods/services were calculated and modeled to determine their direct, indirect, and induced impacts on the local and state economy
- **UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS:** Annual expenditures on salaries, services, and supplies by GVSU were analyzed to assess the ripple effects on supporting industries and job creation.
- **CAPITAL SPENDING:** Major construction and infrastructure investment data were used to evaluate the short-term economic impact of GVSU's annual capital expenditures.
- **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:** Spending on research grants and contracts was assessed based on how those funds circulate through wages, equipment purchases, and service use within the local economy.
- **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT:** Expenditures by the athletic department (e.g., staff salaries, team travel, and events) were analyzed for their impact on local vendors, businesses, and tourism-related activity.
- **ALUMNI LIFETIME EARNINGS:** The enhanced earning potential of GVSU graduates compared to non-graduates was estimated, and the resulting increased household income was analyzed for its long-term contribution to regional and state-wide economic activity.

The economic impact was estimated using the IMPLAN model, a regional input-output analysis tool that measures the ripple effects of economic activity within a defined area.¹ IMPLAN uses multipliers to capture the full impact of a change in demand, broken down into three effects:²

1.0 OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

DIRECT EFFECTS: The initial spending or change in demand determined by the analyst. This spending is applied to the IMPLAN model to estimate how the local economy responds.

INDIRECT EFFECTS: Business-to-business purchases in the supply chain are triggered by the initial spending. For example, suppliers to restaurants, hotels, or retailers see increased sales.

INDUCED EFFECTS: Household spending by workers (after taxes and savings) within the supply chain, generating additional economic activity in the region.

The IMPLAN model will report economic impact in four ways:³

OUTPUT: This represents the total value of production in an industry, including both intermediate inputs and value-added. It reflects the full economic activity but may be overstated if intermediate inputs are counted multiple times through the production chain.

LABOR INCOME: The increase in wages, salaries, employee benefits, and proprietors' income generated by the initial change in demand (direct effects) and the resulting indirect and induced economic activity.

EMPLOYMENT: The total number of jobs supported by direct spending or the initial change in demand. This figure includes both full- and part-time positions and does not account for workers who switch jobs within the region, which can lead to an overestimation of net job creation.

VALUE ADDED: The contribution of an activity to the economic region's gross domestic product (GDP), including wages, profits, and taxes minus subsidies.

In many cases, the results of the economic impact analysis are rounded to the nearest million or billion to avoid implying unwarranted precision. Readers should understand that these figures are estimates derived from economic modeling—not the outcome of a formal financial audit. Rounding is intended to present reliable results while maintaining transparency about the inherent limitations of model-based analysis, not to obscure information.

¹ Full IMPLAN disclaimer can be found in Appendix A1: IMPLAN Disclaimer and Definitions.

² <https://blog.implan.com/understanding-implan-effects>.

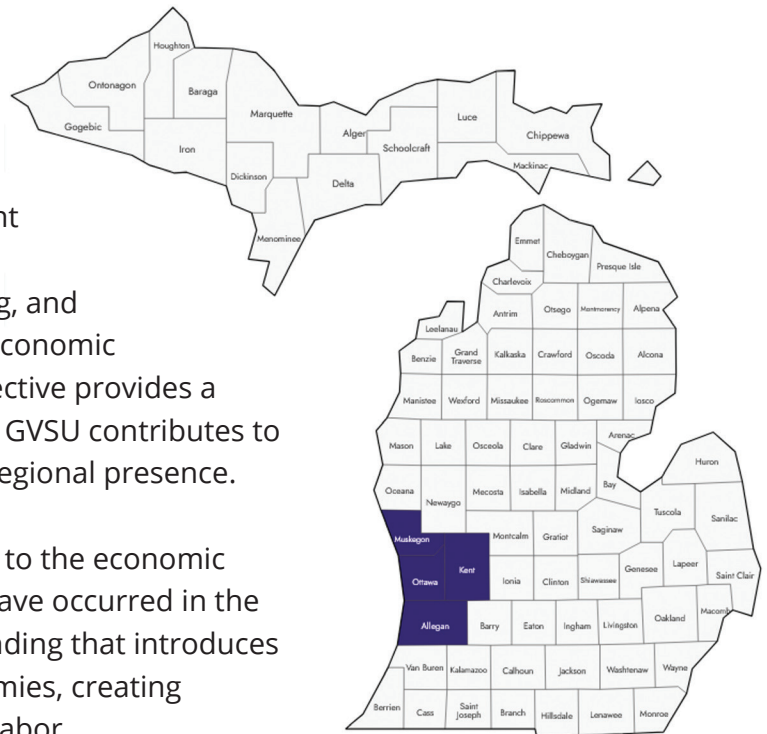
³ Expanded definitions can be found in Appendix A1: IMPLAN Disclaimer and Definitions.

2.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GVSU

To accurately assess the economic impact, it is essential to first define the local region. Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Allegan (KOMA) counties were selected for this analysis because they represent the primary geographic area where GVSU operates and exerts its most direct economic influence. Additionally, approximately 64 percent of enrolled students in 2023–2024 were residents of these counties.

In addition to the local region, the state of Michigan is included in this analysis to capture the broader economic footprint of the university. With approximately 98 percent of GVSU students being Michigan residents, the university's operations, student spending, and alumni earnings have significant statewide economic implications. Including the state-level perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how GVSU contributes to Michigan's economy beyond its immediate regional presence.

In this analysis, new economic impact refers to the economic activity generated by GVSU that would not have occurred in the absence of the university. This includes spending that introduces new dollars into KOMA and Michigan economies, creating additional demand for goods, services, and labor.



Total Annual Economic Impact on Michigan	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Student Expenditures	\$251.1M	\$308.1M	2,346
GVSU Operational Spending (includes wages)	\$501.1M	\$886.1M	4,979
GVSU Capital Expenditures (5yr Average)	\$19.5M	\$32.7M	186
GVSU Research and Development Spending	\$6.2M	\$9.0M	47
Athletic Department Impact	\$8.8M	\$15.7M	104
Total annual economic impact on Michigan	\$787M	\$1.3B	7,662

2.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GVSU (CONTINUED)

GVSU alumni contribute roughly \$1.6 billion in additional lifetime earnings. This income boosts overall economic activity by driving greater demand for goods and services, leading to an estimated \$1.8 billion in total economic impact and supporting approximately 9,635 jobs throughout Michigan.

Total Economic Impact of Alumni Earnings	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Alumni Earnings	\$1.6B	\$1.8B	9,635

GVSU generates \$2.3 billion in direct spending annually, fueling significant economic activity across Michigan. This spending results in a total economic output of \$3.0 billion and over 116,000 jobs sustained, including 98,880 alumni working in Michigan and 17,297 jobs supported statewide. In addition to its statewide impact, GVSU plays a crucial role in strengthening the local region through job creation, student and visitor spending, and partnerships that support community development.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Overall Economic Impact of GVSU	\$2.4B	\$3.0B	17,297

Total Jobs	GVSU Alumni Working in Michigan	Jobs Supported	Total Jobs Sustained
Overall Jobs related to GVSU state wide	98,880	17,297	116,177



2.1 STUDENT EXPENDITURES

Student spending by individuals who relocate to the region to attend GVSU represents new demand for housing, food, transportation, and other services. In Fall 2023, GVSU enrolled 22,269 students, with 98.6 percent identified as Michigan residents and 64.3 percent residing in KOMA counties. Data from GVSU's Office of Institutional Analysis provided a detailed breakdown of student enrollment by term (Summer 2023, Fall 2023, and Winter 2024), academic level (undergraduate or graduate), housing status (on-campus or off-campus), and county of residence.

Spending estimates are based on the average cost of attendance during fiscal year 2023–2024. Students spend an average of \$6,777 per semester. Spending estimates were adjusted for students living on campus, those with meal plans, and student employment status. Student spending categories include housing (both on- and off-campus), off-campus dining and food purchases (including alcohol), miscellaneous retail and grocery expenses, books and supplies, and transportation. Transportation costs were adjusted based on whether students lived on or off campus. On-campus housing and meal plan data were drawn from GVSU's FY 2024 Housing and Dining budget.

GVSU employs 3,551 student workers, or approximately 16 percent of enrolled students (Fall 2023). To avoid double-counting, spending by these students was excluded from the student spending analysis, as their wages are captured under GVSU's operational spending.

In FY 2024, total student expenditures are estimated at \$251 million, generating an economic impact of approximately \$308 million and supporting 2,346 jobs. Roughly 96% of this impact occurs within the KOMA region.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Student Expenditures: KOMA Residents	\$119.3M	\$164.8M	1,373
Student Expenditures – Nonlocal Students	\$131.8M	\$143.3M	973
Total Annual Economic Impact of Students	\$251.1M	\$308.1M	2,346

2.2 GVSU OPERATIONAL SPENDING

Operational spending, including employee wages and salaries, drives local economic activity as GVSU staff and faculty spend their income on goods and services within the region. Operational spending and payroll data were obtained from the fiscal year 2024 annual report.

In FY 2024, GVSU reported total operational spending of \$497 million, with 43 percent occurring in Grand Rapids (Kent County) and 50.4% in Allendale (Ottawa County), where its main campus is located. Of this total, \$330 million was attributed to wages and salaries, with 21% occurring in Grand Rapids and 78 percent in Allendale. GVSU employed 3,261 faculty and staff members, whose earnings contributed significantly to regional economic activity through household spending on goods and services.

Research and development (R&D) expenditures funded by external grants were excluded from operational spending totals, as they were analyzed separately due to their distinct economic contribution.

Overall, GVSU’s operational spending generated an estimated \$886 million in economic output and supported approximately 4,979 jobs. Approximately 96 percent of this impact occurred within the KOMA region, reflecting the university’s strong and concentrated influence on the local economy.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
GVSU Operational Spending - KOMA	\$496.1M	\$828.3M	4,704
GVSU Operational Spending - Michigan (Net KOMA)	\$5.1M	\$44.1M	197
Total Annual Economic Impact of GVSU Spending	\$501.1M	\$886M	4,979

2.3 GVSU CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Capital Expenditures, including major construction projects and infrastructure investments, generate short-term economic activity through spending on labor, materials, and contracted services. Capital expenditure data were obtained from GVSU's fiscal year 2024 financial statements and adjusted for inflation where appropriate. To smooth year-to-year variability, a five-year average was used to estimate the overall economic impact.

Over the past five years, GVSU invested a total of \$96 million in capital projects, with \$69 million occurring in Ottawa County and \$27 million in Kent County.

Based on the five-year average, GVSU's capital spending generated an estimated \$33 million in annual economic output, with \$23 million in Ottawa County and \$10 million in Kent County. Capital expenditures supported an estimated 186 jobs per year through construction labor, materials procurement, and contracted services.

Major capital projects during this period included renovations to the Holland Campus and Lubbers Stadium, development of the Mount Vernon Pedestrian Mall, expansion of the Fieldhouse and Recreation Center, construction of student parking for the Health Campus, and numerous improvements to residential housing and academic buildings. These investments not only enhance the university's infrastructure but also contribute to short-term economic activity in the surrounding region.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
GVSU CapEx - 5yr Average - Kent County	\$5.5M	\$9.9M	54
GVSU CapEx - 5yr Average - Ottawa County	\$14.0M	\$22.8M	132
Total Annual Economic Impact of Students	\$19.5M	\$32.7M	186

2.3 GVSU CAPITAL EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

Since the close of FY 2024, GVSU has already invested an additional \$18 million in capital improvements. Looking ahead, the university plans to invest another \$120 million between May 2026 and August 2028 in two major projects: the Blue Dot Lab and renovations to WGVU. The Blue Dot Lab will serve as a multidisciplinary innovation space focused on emerging technologies and applied research, while the WGVU facility upgrades will modernize the university's public media infrastructure. These upcoming projects will be analyzed separately from the historical capital expenditures outlined above. It should be noted that the construction impact presented below is for the entire project and reflects economic activity that occurs solely during the construction phase of the project. These impacts are temporary and do not extend into the operational phase unless otherwise specified.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Blue Dot Lab and WGVU Projects (Kent County)	\$117.1M	\$187.1M	1,059



2.4 GVSU RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SPENDING

Research and Development (R&D) at GVSU includes activities that advance knowledge and innovation across disciplines. These efforts support academic research, community problem-solving, and regional economic growth. R&D spending, often funded by external grants, brings new dollars into the local economy and supports jobs across multiple industries.

Spending data were sourced from the 2023 Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey, conducted by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES), and adjusted to 2024 dollars.

In 2023 (adjusted to 2024 dollars), GVSU spent an estimated \$6.2 million on R&D activities. Approximately 90 percent of this spending occurred within the KOMA region, making it a significant contributor to the local economy. These expenditures support skilled labor, professional services, and equipment suppliers, and often lead to longer-term partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit organizations. R&D spending generated an estimated \$9 million in economic impact and supported 47 jobs. Approximately 80 percent of this impact occurred within the KOMA region.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
GVSU R&D Spending - KOMA	\$5.6M	\$7.1M	38
GVSU R&D Spending - Michigan (Net KOMA)	\$623,000	\$1.9M	9
Total Annual Economic Impact of Students	\$6.2M	\$9M	47

Funding sources for GVSU's R&D are diverse and reflect a combination of external and internal support. Based on data from the 2023 Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey—an annual national survey conducted by the National Science Foundation's National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)—the composition of GVSU's R&D funding is as follows:

- 29 percent from the federal government
- 7 percent from state and local governments
- 47 percent from institutional funds
- 9 percent from nonprofit organizations
- 8 percent from other sources, such as business partnerships or internal reinvestment

These sources reflect GVSU's ongoing efforts to secure competitive grant funding while investing its resources to support innovation and research capacity. Because much of this funding originates from outside the region—particularly federal and nonprofit grants—R&D spending represents an infusion of new dollars into the local economy.



2.5 GVSU ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT SPENDING

Athletic department spending at GVSU contributes to the local economy through operations, staffing, team travel, and event management. These activities primarily occur within Ottawa County, where GVSU's athletic facilities are located. Athletic spending is based on data provided directly by the department, including total operational spending reported to the NCAA and ticketed admissions to all sporting events. Visitor spending estimates are derived from an intercept survey conducted during the 2023 football season (adjusted for inflation).

In fiscal year 2024, GVSU reported \$25 million in athletic-related expenditures. To avoid double counting, spending directly supported by GVSU's operational budget and its indirect effects were excluded from the impact analysis.

In addition to institutional spending, spectator attendance at athletic events—especially football—drives tourism-related economic activity. Visitor spending on dining, lodging, transportation, and retail during the 2023 football season was estimated at \$3.3 million, based on intercept survey data.

Combined, GVSU athletic operations and visitor spending generated an estimated \$9 million in economic impact within Ottawa County, supporting 69 jobs. A stand-alone section focused on the full impact of the athletic department—including facilities, student-athlete engagement, and broader tourism effects—will be included in this study.

Total Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Athletics and Visitor Spending – KOMA (Ottawa Cty)	\$8.8M	\$13.4M	93
Athletics and Visitor Spending - Michigan (Net KOMA)		\$2.2M	11
Total Annual Economic Impact of Students	\$8.8M	\$15.7M	104

2.6 GVSU ALUMNI EARNINGS

Alumni Lifetime Earnings represent the enhanced earning potential that graduates of GVSU enjoy compared to individuals without a college degree or with degrees from peer institutions.⁴ These additional earnings, when spent within the region or state, represent long-term contributions to household income, consumer spending, and overall economic vitality. Data from GVSU, the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, and the MI School Data website were used to estimate lifetime earnings, with all figures adjusted for inflation where appropriate.

GVSU has approximately 115,000 undergraduate alumni and 29,000 graduate alumni, with 86 percent employed within Michigan. Nearly 100,000 GVSU alumni live and work in Michigan — 1 in every 20 college-educated jobs statewide is held by a Laker. Research indicates that roughly 20% of undergraduate students would likely not attend college if a university were not located nearby.⁵ These students, benefiting from GVSU's presence, earn an average annual wage premium of \$27,653 compared to high school graduates in Michigan.⁶ Collectively, this group generates approximately \$547 million in additional earnings throughout their careers compared to high school graduates. The remaining 80 percent of GVSU undergraduate alumni produce an estimated \$276 million in premium earnings beyond those of high school graduates.

Earnings of Recent Undergraduates	GVSU Alumni	Peer College Alumni	Did Not Attend College
Median Earnings	\$59,553	\$56,069	\$31,900
GVSU Premium Advantage		6%	87%

Graduate alumni earnings are also substantial. The median wage for graduate degree holders across Michigan universities is \$86,400, according to MI School Data. Compared to peer institutions, where the average median graduate income is \$56,069⁷, GVSU graduate alumni earn an estimated \$761 million in additional wages.

⁴ Peer institutions include Oakland University, Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Ferris State University, Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University, Saginaw Valley State University, and Western Michigan University

⁵ The 20% figure reflects pre-COVID data. Since the pandemic, the increase in online course offerings has likely led to a decrease in this percentage.

⁶ Based on median incomes from michigan.gov's MI School Data website

⁷ Based on median incomes from the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard

2.6 GVSU ALUMNI EARNINGS (CONTINUED)

Combined, the estimated income of all GVSU alumni that remain in Michigan last year was \$7.6 billion, using known wages at given times and the progression of wages over time for given majors. The combined premium attributed to attending GVSU is \$1.6 billion annually.⁸

Total Annual Economic Impact	Increase in Earnings	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Alumni Earnings – Michigan	\$1.6B	\$1.8B	9,635



⁸ This impact reflects a static snapshot; the authors also calculated the effects looking at the profile of how income changed over the lifetime of individuals. This allowed for the fact that the income of individuals with a bachelors degree increases faster than those without a bachelors degree over the first 20 years after the degree is awarded. However, in the end the result was quantitatively similar to the static analysis. This results in the same basic outcome happening using two different methods using two different datasets.

3.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT BY CAMPUS

GVSU's presence across Michigan extends well beyond its flagship Allendale campus. With additional locations in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Traverse City, and Detroit, each campus plays a unique role in serving its regional community.

Breaking down the economic impact of each campus highlights how GVSU contributes to local economies through job creation, student and visitor spending, and partnerships with businesses and organizations. This localized view underscores the university's broad reach and its commitment to driving economic growth throughout the state.

Total Annual Economic Impact on Michigan	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Allendale Campus (Ottawa County)	\$456.8M	\$643.1M	4,949
Grand Rapids Campus (Kent County)	\$283.5M	\$545.8M	2,384
Muskegon Campus (Muskegon County)	\$8.5M	\$13.5M	71
Traverse City Campus (Grand Traverse County)	\$2.6M	\$4.5M	29
Detroit Campus (Wayne County)	\$2.5M	\$4.2M	29
Total Annual Economic Impact⁹	\$754.0M	\$1,211.0M	7,462

⁹ The final total excludes the impact of alumni earnings, as these cannot be attributed to a specific campus, and also omits spending associated with Allegan County, given the absence of a campus in that region. Campus impacts were estimated using regional multipliers, which differ from both KOMA multipliers and statewide multipliers.

4.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ATHLETICS

Athletics at GVSU are more than a source of school pride—they are a powerful economic engine for Ottawa County. Each season, GVSU athletic events draw thousands of students, alumni, and fans, generating significant economic activity through both university operations and visitor spending.

In 2023, more than 87,900 tickets were sold to athletic events, with football serving as the primary attraction. A survey conducted during the football season found that students spend an average of \$9.90 per game, while public attendees spend approximately \$46.79—totaling an estimated \$3.3 million in direct visitor spending in 2024 dollars.

Beyond game-day spending, the GVSU Athletics Department invested approximately \$25 million into its operations. This includes costs related to coaching and staff salaries, scholarships, travel, facilities, equipment, and game-day operations.

When combined, this activity generated a total economic impact of \$50 million in Ottawa County and supported an estimated 283 jobs. These figures underscore the significant role GVSU athletics play not only in student life, but also in strengthening the local economy through tourism, employment, and community engagement.¹⁰

Total Annual Economic Impact	Direct Impact	Output Impact	Jobs Supported
Athletics-Visitor Spending	\$2.3M	\$3.7M	30
Athletic Department Spending	\$25.0M	\$45.0M	253
Total Annual Economic Impact of Athletics	\$27.3M	\$50.1M	283

¹⁰ This is a standalone economic impact figure. It should not be added to the university's overall impact, as doing so would result in double counting the Athletic Department's spending.



5.0 FISCAL IMPACT OF GVSU

In addition to its significant economic footprint, GVSU generates considerable fiscal impacts—the public revenues derived from university-related economic activity. Fiscal impact analysis estimates how economic events, such as spending by institutions, employees, students, and visitors, translate into government revenues, including income, sales, and property taxes.

This analysis uses the IMPLAN model to assess GVSU’s fiscal contributions at both the KOMA county level (Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Allegan) and the statewide level in Michigan. These estimates reflect the public return on investment from state appropriations and the university’s role as a driver of taxable economic activity.

In FY 2024, GVSU received \$98 million in state appropriations. In comparison, the university’s total economic impact across Michigan was \$3 billion, generating an estimated \$101 million in state tax revenues—more than the original public investment. These revenues include:

- \$23 million from individual income taxes
- \$10 million from property taxes
- \$60 million from sales taxes

At the local level, GVSU’s economic activity generated \$18 million in tax revenue within KOMA counties, primarily through property taxes (\$17 million). These fiscal benefits reinforce the university’s value not only as an educational institution but also as a key contributor to public finance in both the region and the state.

Total Annual Economic Impact	Fiscal Impact
State of Michigan	\$101M
KOMA Counties	\$18M
Federal Government	\$250M

6.0 APPENDIX

6.1 FISCAL IMPACT DETAILS

This section will provide the fiscal impact for each economic impact category.

Student Spending and GVSU Operational Spending	KOMA	State	Federal
Income Taxes (personal and corporate)	\$336,000	\$9M	\$39M
Sales Tax	\$43,000	\$19M	
Property Taxes	\$16M	\$3M	
Other Taxes Collected	\$520,000	\$3M	\$66M
Total fiscal impact	\$17M	\$34M	\$105M

GVSU Annual CapEx Spending	KOMA	State	Federal
Income Taxes (personal and corporate)	\$9,000	\$232,000	\$1.1M
Sales Tax	\$1,000	\$314,000	
Property Taxes	\$234,000	\$55,000	
Other Taxes Collected	\$7,000	\$51,000	\$1.5M
Total fiscal impact	\$251,000	\$651,000	\$2.6M

GVSU R&D Spending	KOMA	State	Federal
Income Taxes (personal and corporate)	\$4,000	\$69,000	\$322,000
Sales Tax	\$0	\$125,000	
Property Taxes	\$79,000	\$20,000	
Other Taxes Collected	\$2,000	\$17,000	\$378,000
Total fiscal impact	\$85,000	\$230,000	\$700,000

6.0 APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

6.1 FISCAL IMPACT DETAILS

GVSU Athletic Department Spending (Net GVSU direct support)	KOMA	State	Federal
Income Taxes (personal and corporate)	\$0	\$78,000	\$365,000
Sales Tax	\$0	\$266,000	
Property Taxes	\$231,000	\$51,000	
Other Taxes Collected	\$9,000	\$35,000	\$498,000
Total fiscal impact	\$240,000	\$429,000	\$863,000

GVSU Alumni Earnings	State	Federal
Income Taxes (personal and corporate)	\$14M	\$68M
Sales Tax	\$40M	
Property Taxes	\$6M	
Other Taxes Collected	\$5M	\$73M
Total fiscal impact	\$65M	\$141M

6.0 APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

6.2 ECONOMIC IMPACT COMPARISON

The table below compares GVSU with its peer universities. The output figure is net of alumni earnings, as not all studies included alumni impacts in their estimates. All monetary values have been adjusted to 2024 dollars. Please note that the studies used varying methodologies, and not all institutions reported alumni impact figures. The methodologies were not independently audited for accuracy or consistency.

Michigan Universities	Year of Study	Fall 2024 Enrollment	Output	Alumni Earnings Impact	State Allocation	Annual Return on State Investment
Grand Valley State University	2025	22,011	\$1.3B	\$1.8B	\$97.6M	31 to 1
Oakland University	2025	15,768	\$864M	\$1.1B	\$74.0M	27 to 1
Central Michigan University	2017	14,466	\$362M	\$1.2B	\$97.7M	16 to 1
Western Michigan University	2018	17,605	\$2.0B	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lake Superior State University	2013	1,669	\$151M	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northern Michigan University	2012	7,409	\$426M	N/A	N/A	N/A

National Universities	Year of Study	Fall 2024 Enrollment	Output	Alumni Earnings Impact	State Allocation	Annual Return on State Investment
Grand Valley State University	2025	22,011	\$1.3B	\$1.8B	\$97.6M	31 to 1
Illinois State University	2016	20,615	\$1.1B	N/A	N/A	N/A
University of Northern Iowa	2023	9,231	\$641M	\$1.3B	\$108.7M	18 to 1
Wright State University	2023	13,400	\$485M	\$2.1B	\$82.0M	32 to 1
Appalachian State University	2011	21,570	\$764M	N/A	N/A	N/A
Western Washington University	2024	14,700	\$616M	\$617M	\$118.3M	10 to 1



gvsu.edu/economic-impact

At Grand Valley State University, we empower learners in their pursuits, professions, and purpose. The university enriches society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, advancement of equity, and public service.

The University is an antidiscrimination, equal employment opportunity institution, consistent with its obligations as a federal contractor. It encourages diversity and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all of its programs, and the use of its facilities. It is committed to protecting the constitutional and statutory civil rights of persons connected with the University. 10/25

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