

The Graduate School Citations for Academic Excellence

Winter 2024

Presented by The Graduate School

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in collaboration with the
Graduate Student Association (GSA)



Dear friends and members of our graduate education community,

At the end of each academic semester, we have the great pleasure to honor those students and faculty who have distinguished themselves in graduate education at Grand Valley State University. The Graduate School Citation Awards for Academic Excellence and the Graduate Student Association Faculty Awards are proud Grand Valley State University traditions that began in 2006 thanks to the combined efforts of the University Graduate Council and the Graduate Program Directors. The Graduate School and the Graduate Student Association serve as co-sponsors for this event.

The Graduate School Citation Awards recognize excellence in academic performance in several categories. Graduate students are nominated for these awards by staff or faculty members, advisors, graduate program directors, and departmental chairs or school directors. The Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School reviews the nominees and approves the final selection. Each recipient receives a certificate of recognition and a graduate honors cord. Additionally, the Graduate Student Association honors members of our graduate faculty who have distinguished themselves in mentoring and supporting our students at Grand Valley. Their noteworthy dedication helps to create a vibrant and engaged learning community.

Grand Valley State University is extremely proud of the accomplishments of these graduate students and graduate faculty members. I commend each of our award winners and wish them a very successful future.

Congratulations to all!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey A. Potteiger'.

Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Ph.D., FACSM
Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School
Grand Valley State University

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**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Winter 2024**

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A DEGREE PROGRAM

Seidman College of Business

- ❖ Jason Los, Master of Business Administration

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Kassidi Adams, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Emily Davis, Educational Specialist in Leadership
- ❖ Danielle DeJonge, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Hailey Felten, Social Work
- ❖ Narelle Hickmon, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Jered Holland, Health Administration
- ❖ Colton Hyble, Public Administration
- ❖ Sophie Kurima, School Counseling

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Nathaniel Holmes, Engineering
- ❖ Nicholas Reitz, Applied Computer Science
- ❖ Gautam Subedi, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Sam Corbin, Athletic Training
- ❖ Olivia Martin, Public Health
- ❖ Stephen McGraw, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Hannah Robinson, Doctor of Audiology
- ❖ Melissa Wilkinson, Medical Dosimetry
- ❖ Ellie Willemin, Clinical Dietetics

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Jeannie Kane, Cell and Molecular Biology

- ❖ Madison Kryska, School Psychology and Psychological Specialist
- ❖ Hunter Mylek, Communications
- ❖ Carly Rinas, Biostatistics
- ❖ Brooke Schmidt, Applied Statistics

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Mary Claire Meimers, Doctor of Nursing Practice

OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Tabor Gleason, Clinical Dietetics

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Genevieve Wisby, Engineering

OUTSTANDING FINAL PROJECT

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Devan Bridget, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Danielle DeJonge, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Nicole Sutton, Social Work
- ❖ Cion Swoope, Higher Education

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Kaitlyn Sallans Haack, Engineering
- ❖ Marwah Talbeh, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Katie Black, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Julia Clover, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Erin Colling, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Hannah Doerr, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Ashley Flores, Doctor of Physical Therapy

- ❖ Shae Hand, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Levi Harmon, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Teneisha McDonald, Public Health
- ❖ Kyra Shaw, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Ashley Teltow, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Alec Walstra, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Ellie Willemin, Public Health

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Mary Kooyer, Doctor of Nursing Practice

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Esi Aniwa, Communications
- ❖ Zane Walters, Cell and Molecular Biology

OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Anton Petrenko, Engineering
- ❖ Astha Thapa, Applied Computer Science

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Julia Treme, Nursing

**EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO
THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION**

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Kendra Avila, Social Work
- ❖ Angelina Bauer, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Sri Rakumari Mendu, Health Administration
- ❖ Marc VanderStelt, Public Administration

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Samuel Menzie, Engineering

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Raegan Holek, Public Health
- ❖ Alyssa Misiak, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Robert Page, Doctor of Audiology

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Skye Johnson, School Psychology and Psychological Specialist
- ❖ Kate Lucas, Biology – Annis Water Resources Institute

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO GVSU

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Evan Potter, Health Administration
- ❖ Grace Roedel, Social Work

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Jessica Doty, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Allison Dunn, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Anna Dupke, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Tabor Gleason, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Tess Scheidel, Public Health

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Aleksandra Makrievski, Cell and Molecular Biology
- ❖ Jazmin Wilson, Communications

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Henry Peña, Doctor of Nursing Practice

EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GVSU

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ El Beringer, Social Work

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Selena Cade, Applied Computer Science

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Erick Hernandez-Morales, Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ❖ Amelia Horn, Public Health
- ❖ Kierra Washington, Doctor of Physical Therapy

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Monase Chibambo, Doctor of Nursing Practice

EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Angie Leedy, Social Work
- ❖ Catherine Zietse, Public Administration

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Marialuisa Ochoa, Public Health

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Mary Kooyer, Doctor of Nursing Practice

3-MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION

*Seidman College of Business and College of Education & Community
Innovation*

❖ Jowei Yek, Business Administration and Social Innovation

*Congratulations to the Winter 2024
Graduate School Citation Award Recipients!*

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION FACULTY AWARDS

Winter 2024

KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Elizabeth Davis, Nursing
- ❖ Donna Rinker, Nursing

OUTSTANDING MENTORSHIP AWARD

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Carrie Buist, School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Yunju Lee, School of Engineering
- ❖ Wendy Reffeor, School of Engineering
- ❖ Suhila Sawesi, School of Computing

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Sarah Nechuta, School of Interdisciplinary Health

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Charlyn Partridge, Biology and Annis Water Resources Institute
- ❖ Carl Ruetz III, Biology and Annis Water Resources Institute

OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Paul Bylsma, Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling
- ❖ Laila McCloud, Department Educational Leadership and Counseling

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Zachary DeBruine, School of Computing

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Jonathan Rose, Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Nicole Harpold, Nursing

*Congratulations to the Winter 2024
Graduate Student Association Faculty Award Recipients!*

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN THE DEGREE PROGRAM
Winter 2024**

Seidman College of Business

❖ **Jason Los, Master of Business Administration**

The EMBA is student-centered, which requires students to come prepared and ready to engage in class discussion. Mr. Los consistently prepared above and beyond for his classes – both by completed the assigned work and digging deeper to gain greater insights. He arrived, with intent, ready to practice his strategic thinking skills by asking good questions, challenging assumptions, and committing to a diversity of thought. He is intellectually curious and found value in every reading, every assignment, every discussion, every guest speaker. It will come as no surprise that Jason achieved a 4.0 GPA. It is important for me to comment on Mr. Los’s contribution to his entire EMBA cohort. Mr. Los serves as a leader of his cohort, respected, and trusted by his colleagues. He also is remarkable at ‘lifting up’ the other cohort members, allowing them to lead as subject matter experts. He does not require, nor ask for, the center of attention and easily offers the light to shine on others. Mr. Los is an excellent facilitator of ideas, a natural brainstormer, and brings energy to any group discussion with his ability to see possibilities, honor the contribution of others, and influencing by example.

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Kassidi Adams, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**

Kassidi has demonstrated academic excellence by maintaining a high GPA, achieving high grades in her courses. However, beyond grades, Kassidi has performed in outstanding ways within her coursework. For example, in Fall 2023, Kassidi was enrolled in EDR 693: the literacy master’s project course. Her thoughtful and conscientious persona led her to create a meaningful project centered on inclusion, advocacy, and support for some of the most marginalized students in our schools (LGBTQ+). Additionally, Kassidi stood

out in her literacy practicum course (EDR 685), demonstrating thoughtful and excellent application of learning. Thus, we have looked to Kassidi as a leader in our courses, and we see her as an emerging leader in the field. Kassidi is a talented woman—a true asset to the field. Kassidi’s dedication to the education of students is obvious, as well as her commitment to her own growth and learning. As faculty, we specifically observed these qualities in Kassidi while working with her in Literacy Studies at Grand Valley State University.

❖ **Emily Davis, Educational Specialist in Leadership**

Ms. Davis currently serves as the Assistant Director for the CLAS Academic Advising Center here at Grand Valley State University while she completes her Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership. This balancing act is very demanding, and Emily rises to the challenge on a consistent basis, even zooming into class when she’s a bit under the weather. Her academic work is outstanding, and she has attained a 4.0 GPA across the program so far. She was a unanimous choice of Ed.S. faculty when nominated for this award. Beyond high quality academic work, Emily’s contributions to in person sessions and discussion boards are very well thought out, complement, and extend the insights of others, and build the collaborative atmosphere for which we strive in Ed. S. program. Faculty are always pleased to see her on a roster at the beginning of the term as we know her contributions to class will be of high quality, serving as a positive role model for her student colleagues. More specifically, Emily Davis brings considerable experience from the higher education space with her work in housing after her bachelor’s degree, a Living Center Director after obtaining her Master’s in College Student Affairs Leadership and now Assistant Director in CLAS Advising. Her prior and current leadership experiences complement her coursework and many thoughtful contributions during in person sessions. She has also expressed insights into the vital importance of advising and how it may be improved so GVSU students have an even better undergraduate experience. MS. Davis represents well the growing population of higher education students we’re seeing in the Ed.S. program. She is the kind of leader and advisor that we would want for our own children, and we certainly appreciate her current impact on students at GVSU. We also look forward to watching her career progress as it undoubtedly will.

❖ **Danielle DeJonge, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**

Ms. DeJonge is an outstanding student who has completed her master's degree in education, general literacy studies with a perfect GPA of 4.0. She epitomizes the model graduate student, always enquiring, developing critical thinking, and analyzing issues from multiple angles. She has collaborated on multiple projects with peers, who have always commented on her exceptional leadership qualities. She was very well prepared for all the class discussions. I had particularly noted that she sought excellence in what she did. Ms. DeJonge has taken courses from multiple professors and instructors, who all have commented on her excellent dispositions to improve and work toward going beyond the minimum requirements of their course work.

❖ **Hailey Felten, Master of Social Work**

Hailey has demonstrated academic excellence in all facets of graduate study within the School of Social Work. Throughout her tenure as an MSW student, Hailey has consistently displayed an exceptional commitment to scholarly pursuit, showcased outstanding performance in coursework, and exhibited academic skills that far surpass the norm through her assistance in developing a new course on trauma treatment for social work students. In terms of academic achievement, Hailey has maintained an impressive 4.0 grade point average, reflecting her dedication to mastering the field of social work while also engaging in her social work practicum at a local school. Her performance in coursework and practicum has been consistently outstanding, characterized by a depth of understanding, critical thinking, and a willingness to engage with complex concepts and show compassion to each person she encounters. Hailey approaches each academic challenge with vigor and determination, consistently exceeding expectations and setting a high standard for her peers. Moreover, her written work demonstrates not only a mastery of social work practices but also a keen ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity and precision. Additionally, she has actively contributed to the School of Social Work at GVSU through her service and leadership, further enhancing the educational experience for their peers. Over the past two years, Hailey has assisted faculty member Dr. Joshua Bishop in developing a new social work course titled "Trauma Treatment Concepts and Intervention." This course exposed future social work students to a broad

range of evidence-based interventions for trauma that are applicable across the lifespan. Hailey also presented last year at the Council of Social Work Education's Annual Program Meeting with Dr. Bishop regarding social work students' preparedness to practice with traumatized individuals, groups, and communities based on their work developing the course. Hailey embodies the ideals of academic excellence and serves as an inspiration to her fellow students and social workers alike.

❖ **Narelle Hickmon, Master of Science in Criminal Justice**

Narelle has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade point average in our program, further Narelle has produced research that has garnered the attention of multiple professors in our program who have gone on to develop professional conference presentations with Narelle as presenter fielding all questions with ease and accuracy. Narelle has also been an asset in our cold case class working on investigating cold cases, yes, but even more impressive, working with Michigan State Police current and retired officers. I think this speaks directly to the service component of this award as Narelle is putting in a tremendous amount of work in attempting to solve actual cold cases which means that some semblance of justice is being achieved – for the victims, their loved ones, and in turn the community as well. I believe wholeheartedly that Narelle has proven to be a leader both inside and outside of her classes, encouraging other students, mentoring undergraduate students, having a leadership position in the graduate student organization which included her recently organizing a campus-wide special speaker event featuring a forensic scientist. It is also important to note that recently, Narelle accepted a full graduate assistantship into Michigan State University's Criminal Justice Doctoral Program. Narelle is easily one of our top performing graduate students our program has ever seen. That is a bold statement, but entirely accurate in my opinion. Further, when considering who to nominate for this award, every committee member selected Narelle. Finally, I'd like to add that in addition to her academic excellence, Narelle is of high character and integrity, which in my regard are essential qualities to have, especially for a current and future leader like Narelle Hickmon.

❖ **Jered Holland, Master of Health Administration**

Jered came to the Master of Health Administration program as a practicing dental health professional who has been able to master the balance of work,

school, and professional activity. He exemplified both academic and professional excellence. Aside from maintaining his high GPA, Jered also practiced the qualities of a great communicator, classroom leader, Healthcare Professional Graduate Student Association VP of Finance, and as a professional role model. He is a well-rounded young professional who demonstrated scholarly excellence and embodied health administration professional values.

❖ **Colton Hyble, Master of Public Administration**

Colton has been an exemplary graduate student who epitomizes exceptional performance in every facet of his graduate school experience. While pursuing his degree, he balanced academic rigor with remarkable extracurricular achievements as a leader on Grand Valley State University's football team. His dedication to hard work, teamwork, and leadership both on the field and in the classroom are inspiring. Recently hired by the City of Wyoming as a planner, Colton will showcase the practical application of knowledge, skills, and abilities that he further honed in the MPA program. We are proud of the way Colton Hyble embodies the ideal of a well-rounded, accomplished scholar ready to excel in any endeavor.

❖ **Sophie Kurima, Master of Education in School Counseling**

Sophie consistently goes above and beyond in her academic work, striving not for a grade, but rather to learn all she can for each assignment. She asks astute questions that allow her peers to learn from her, as the questions she poses are often at a deeper level than those typically offered by students. Sophie thinks deeply about her work and has engaged all faculty members who have had the pleasure of teaching her in deep conversations about the course content and its application to real life situations. Our program encourages all of our students to seek out diverse practicum and internship experiences. Sophie took that to heart and spent her required hours in a variety of different school locations and environments. She chose to do her internship at Union High School in Grand Rapids, which was a different school environment than she was used to. This opened Sophie's eyes to so much reality, and her compassion and understanding for students' unique circumstances, challenges, and strengths really grew over the course of her 600-hour internship. Sophie, more than any other student graduating this semester, demonstrates what academic excellence truly is, and she does so

with humility. She is kind and is a quiet leader simply by the way she approaches her time in the classroom with intentionality and inquisitiveness. She has been a true joy to have as a student, and we will all collectively miss her presence in our program as she moves on to become a professional school counselor. She is more than ready for that endeavor!

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Nathaniel Holmes, Master of Science in Engineering**

His research is for a company project with a focus on transient fluid mechanics using CFD applications. He is also working as a special GA with me in preparing the new wind tunnel for the fluid mechanics labs. In the classroom and now in the research, I have seen first-hand Nate's special and unique skills. Nate is very strong in the theory and fundamental studies and capable to work independently and develop complex analytical solution. In using simulation tools, he has been pushing his learning envelop and expanded his knowledge to an advanced level of unsteady flow simulations. On top of that, he showed a very creative skills in designing and building component for the wind tunnel using the integration of the traditional machining and 3D printing. Nate is an excellent model for grad students and we are lucky to have him in the School of Engineering.

❖ **Nicholas Reitz, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**

Nicholas was an undergraduate student in our information systems program and was accepted into the combined Information Systems/Applied Computer Science program. He's done very well as an undergraduate and has excelled in the graduate program. Besides his stellar GPA, faculty describe him as "outstanding" and "a joy to have in the classroom". Because of his performance in both the BS and MS programs, faculty will remember him fondly.

❖ **Gautam Subedi, Master of Science in Health Informatics and Bioinformatics**

Gautam demonstrates keen enthusiasm for his work, excellent organization, and strong career potential. He has communicated his research work at the Calvin University Rare Disease Day and is scheduled to present at the Reach

Higher 2025 Presidential Showcase, Student Scholars Day, and the Graduate Student Showcase. We are also working on preparation of a significant publication to which Gautam has contributed meaningfully. In our weekly interactions Gautam has shown great initiative, capacity to search and reason about a large body of scientific literature and apply the scientific method to create new research products and derive new knowledge. I endorse his achievement and commend his hard work towards becoming a future bioinformatician.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Sam Corbin, Master of Athletic Training**

Academically Sam has excelled in the classroom. Sam's research, titled "*Medial Femoral Condyle Stress Fracture in 17-year-old Male Runner: Level 4 Rare Events CASE Study*", was accepted for presentation at the Great Lakes Athletic Trainers Association professional education conference. Selection is through a peer reviewed process, where his peers in this case were faculty members on the GLATA Research Committee. Sam was also offered a Graduate Assistantship with the Athletic Training program and has done an excellent job in completing all tasks that have been requested. Through these experiences Sam has demonstrated that he has a strong foundational knowledge in the profession of athletic training, while at the same time appreciating the importance of interprofessional education and he understands the importance of research and scholarly endeavors to improve his chosen profession. Sam's leadership, maturity, and passion for Athletic Training is evident and I'm excited to see what the future will hold for Sam. Sam demonstrates the qualities of a leader in his everyday actions. He is thoughtful, reflective, inquisitive and respectful.

❖ **Olivia Martin, Master of Public Health**

Throughout her time in the MPH program, Olivia has shined in her consistent commitment to high quality work in all her courses on every assignment and her masters project work, while having a positive and collaborative attitude. Her commitment to her academics is truly exceptional and she is a role model to her peers. Olivia has an exceptional work ethic and commitment to learning epidemiology and public health research methods. She goes beyond required expectations to truly understand concepts and takes advantage of all opportunities for learning and application of methods. She demonstrates a high understanding of complex public health methods and data analysis approaches. She has received an A in every class in the MPH program. Further, in the four courses where I have been Olivia's professor, she consistently received high A's or perfect scores on all her assignments. As two examples of her high performance in her courses, Olivia received an overall grade of 99.8% in advanced quantitative research methods in public health and 99.7% in infectious disease epidemiology. Olivia is recognized for her academic excellence by her peers. Many of her own peers

have commented on her commitment to academic excellence and the quality of her assignments. They have noted she is a role model and set the standards for quality work in public health and epidemiology coursework.

Olivia has great potential as a leader in the field of public health and epidemiology. She has high personal motivation and is continually challenging herself to learn and apply new methods in public health and epidemiology. Olivia's commitment to high quality work is also demonstrated in her public health research and scientific writing. Olivia was selected to present her research on the social determinants of health and drug overdose at a national conference (American Public Health Association, November 2023) and demonstrated high professionalism and commitment to best practices in public science throughout this research project.

❖ **Stephen McGraw, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Mr. McGraw has distinguished himself with excellence in both didactic and clinical coursework. He is an academic leader in his cohort, displaying a deep understanding of foundational concepts and applied practice in physical therapy. He initiates and engages in rich discussions in the classroom; and consistently considers and applies evidence in clinical practice. In addition to maintaining a near perfect GPA of 3.967, Mr. McGraw has been a significant contributor as a student researcher. Mr. McGraw also mentors 1st year Physical Therapy students in musculoskeletal examination lab by attending their lab sections and independently coordinating lab study sessions. Mr. McGraw's service activities are plentiful including responsibilities as DPT Class of 2024 Treasurer and is an AMBUCS volunteer, and lifeguard. The totality of Mr. McGraw's 3 years in the DPT graduate program is marked with academic excellence. He has distinguished himself in a very strong class of academic peers.

❖ **Hannah Robinson, Doctor of Audiology**

Hannah is a remarkable student. She is consistently in the Top 5% of her class. This is evident in her coursework and clinical skills. Hannah studies to truly learn and apply the material. She goes beyond the requirements and exceeds expectations with every assignment, lab, and clinical experience. She is someone who listens to feedback to improve on her knowledge and skills because she wants to be an exceptional audiologist. Additionally, Hannah is very personable. I have yet to see a patient, peer, or professor that Hannah

could not connect with. Her written and oral communication is routinely professional. I cannot honestly think of one area that Hannah does not excel in, and yet she is always humble and grounded. Hannah has also been active in both leadership and in service while in graduate school at Grand Valley State University. Hannah was the secretary of the GVSU Au.D. chapter of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association. Her minutes were submitted in a timely manner and her enthusiasm for her peers in other roles showed through consistently. Hannah also extended her leadership to the GVSU graduate school where she was actively engaged in supporting graduate students and the university while a member and President of the Graduate Student Association. Hannah has also been very active with Special Olympics Michigan as a Healthy Hearing volunteer, and a volunteer in the newer Healthy Young Athletes program. Hannah's ability to be actively engaged in both the university community and across Michigan with Special Olympics, on top of managing her coursework and clinical training in the accelerated doctoral program highlights Hannah's ability to do multiple things *well*.

❖ **Melissa Wilkinson, Master of Science in Medical Dosimetry**

Melissa has over 12 years of experience as a radiation therapist. Despite her extensive professional background, Melissa chose to further her education at our institution to achieve her Master of Science in Medical Dosimetry. Notably, she has undertaken this endeavor as a devoted mother, relocating her family to support her commitment to the program. Throughout her studies, Melissa exhibits exceptional commitment, achieving a 4.0 GPA and demonstrating a profound understanding of both didactic and clinical aspects of the program. I can always count on Melissa to ask insightful questions, represent her classmates, and attend office hours. Melissa seamlessly integrated into the program and showcases remarkable leadership qualities. She generously shares her wealth of experience, actively participates in class discussions, and was chosen as the Medical Dosimetry Student Organization (MDSO) president. As the president, she has gone above and beyond to ensure that the cohort has the funding necessary to attend the American Association of Medical Dosimetrists annual meeting and uses her past leadership experiences to provide fundraising opportunities. Melissa's research project is not only innovative and unique, but also very well written and articulated. Throughout the process, Melissa has demonstrated an exceptional ability to plan ahead and meet deadlines. She takes great care in

ensuring that every detail is accounted for, and she is always willing to go the extra mile to ensure that her work is of the highest quality. Her advisor has been particularly impressed by her ability to navigate the IRB process, which can be a challenging and complex task. Melissa's passion for Medical Dosimetry is truly contagious, and I have no doubt that she will continue to make significant contributions to the field in years to come. From Melissa's clinical instructor: "Having Melissa as a clinical student has been a very rewarding professional experience for me. From the beginning, she has been ambitious to learn and participate in anything that can complement her studies and enhance her dosimetry understanding and planning skills. She continues to place extremely high expectations upon herself in all of her planning and is eager to request our more challenging and complicated cases. Melissa has brought an additional perspective that complements our department and has developed a positive and professional relationship with all of our staff. We truly appreciate her contributions in striving to provide excellent care for our patients and will continue to encourage her in her education and professional development." Overall, Melissa is an excellent student who enjoys learning, leading her classmates and actively works to be the best medical dosimetrist she can be for the patients.

❖ **Ellie Willemin, Master of Science in Clinical Dietetics**

Ellie is in the last semester of her graduate courses, has completed 1200 hours of supervised practice, and holds a 4.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA). In addition to being an academically strong student, Ellie has served the community, the dietetic profession, and the university. She volunteered for Kids Food Basket from December 2019 to March 2021 and was a Hurricane Relief Mission Trip Leader in Hammond, LA, in March 2022. She also completed the ServSafe Manager certification and Basic Life Support CPR certification. Her involvement at the University level was as President of GVSU's pre-dietetics club and she currently is the membership officer of the Clinical Dietetics Student Association. She is also deeply involved in GVSU Campus Ministry where she volunteers and works as a small group coordinator and administrative assistant. Since August 2022, Ellie has worked as a geriatric caregiver where she plans and prepares meals for the elderly, guides and encourages movement and exercise, completes vitamin and medication passing, and is involved in frequent health checks for wound healing and skin turgor. She has also been employed at IKUS Life Enrichment Services, since May 2021, as a dietary specialist where she uses her creativity

and innovation to develop health programs for campers and restricted meal plans for campers with food allergies and diabetes. Ellie has an extremely strong work ethic and is an exemplary graduate student who has displayed academic excellence, leadership, critical thinking skills, and resourcefulness in her didactic courses, simulation, and culinary labs. I feel confident that her dedication to excellence in the field of dietetics will make her an exceptional dietitian following her graduation in April 2024.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Jeannie Kane, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**

She has maintained a perfect 4.0 graduate GPA – a rare event for students taking our challenging sequence of courses. As part of her degree, Jeannie completed a 9-month internship at the Michigan State Police, Grand Rapids Forensic Laboratory in the Controlled Substances Unit. Her work focused on casework observations in the Biology, Controlled Substances, Firearms & Toolmarks, Latent Prints, and Trace Evidence Units. With her background in chemistry and CMB, she was chosen to initiate the instrument verification process on a GC-MS instrument and to assist on a Biology Unit project. Aided by her successful internship, Jeannie recently accepted an offer to join the Michigan State Police, Grand Rapids Forensic Laboratory as a forensic scientist in the Latent Prints Unit, realizing her ideal career goal.

❖ **Madison Kryska, Master of Science and Psychological Specialist in School Psychology**

Madison has been a high-performing graduate student during all three years of her graduate training and has one of the highest GPAs amongst her cohort. She has challenged students and faculty in the graduate program to shift to a strength-based (vs. deficit-based) approach to special education evaluations. Madison's work in local K-12 schools for practicum/internship over the past three years has also been exceptional. She has been integral in helping her school team run meetings more efficiently through the use of Meeting Mechanics, which she took the initiative to implement. She has made herself a resource to her school community and has engaged in extracurricular activities in which she has provided wellness information to families. She has gotten high praise from her internship supervisor and has established strong working relationships with teachers and administration. On top of her

coursework and K-12 school experiences, Madison also successfully juggled graduate assistantship (GA) positions while in the graduate program. Faculty knew they could always rely on her to complete high- quality work in a timely manner.

❖ **Hunter Mylek, Master of Science in Communications**

Hunter has worked very hard to perform at a high level while in the graduate program. I taught Hunter in our communication ethics course. She was diligent in her work, participated during discussions, and worked well with others in both peer review assignments and group projects. I remember how thoughtful Hunter always was with both her in-class comments and her written work. Her academic performance has been superlative and far exceeds the expectations of the program.

❖ **Carly Rinas, Master of Science in Biostatistics**

Carly goes above and beyond the requirements in all her course work submissions. Carly is always engaged in the classroom and a leader in group projects. She is incredibly organized and very willing to learn new techniques or statistical software. Carly's enthusiasm for the field of statistics has been evident in all her assigned written work and verbal presentations. The same enthusiasm and attention to detail has persisted in explaining statistical subject matter to other students. As a graduate assistant in 2022-23, Carly was superlative in her work in the Statistics Tutoring Center. The following words of praise were sent along by Marcia Frobish, faculty director of the Center: *Carly Rinas was an amazing GA and wonderful tutor in the Stats Center. She worked her designated. She went out of her way to help students and even taught herself R in the Fall so she could help more STA 215 students. I was very lucky to have Carly as a tutor during her first year and am very excited to hear that she is getting an award!* In 2023-24, Carly has served as a statistical support graduate assistant in the Kirkhoff College of Nursing. Her work has again been outstanding in this consulting role as described by Dr. Susan Strouse, Director of the GVSU Center for Nursing Research: *Carly's primary role was assisting faculty and graduate students with the quantitative aspects of their studies or Quality Improvement projects. She was very thorough in her assistance, and very open to feedback. Carly always went above and beyond, helping students understand the required statistical analysis and how to best display the results. She not only knew her statistics, but also ensured that the project leads knew the stats related to*

their projects. Carly was very open to helping in different ways, expanding her knowledge of both statistics as well as working on research teams. Her work and communication were always professional, timely, and well thought out. Many students commented on how her assistance helped them to be successful in completing their degrees and projects. In addition to her graduate assistantship duties in 2023-24, Carly has been working as an epidemiology analyst intern with the Ottawa County Department of Public Health. As well as other projects, she has been an integral part of the analysis for the Youth Awareness Survey (YAS) which collects behavior data on Ottawa County high school students. Carly has been a tremendous student, tutor and consulting statistician in the GVSU and statistical community while she has been part of the GVSU Biostatistics Master's program.

❖ **Brooke Schmidt, Masters of Applied Statistics**

Brooke is very efficient with a strong attention to detail. Her written and computational work are concise and exemplary. Brooke has been a strong tutor in the Statistics Tutoring Center as a graduate assistant. In 2022-23, her tutoring was noted by the Tutoring Center Director as being flexible, enthusiastic, and patient with students. In 2023-24, Brooke has been a graduate assistant in the Marketing Department. The following words of praise come from Dr. Mark, Kubik, Chair of the GVSU Department of Marketing: *Brooke has a keen and ready intellect, she pays attention to detail and has been committed to excellence which is reflected in her work. She consistently delivered high-quality research and support to our faculty which yielded project success from day one when she joined the Marketing Department.* In addition to her graduate assistantship duties in 2023-24, Brooke completed a successful internship at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. Her work involved the creation of interactive dashboards for department quality improvement. Brooke has been a tremendous student, tutor, and collaborative statistician in the GVSU and statistical community.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Mary Claire Meimers, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

She has consistently demonstrated academic excellence across the program as evidenced through her 4.0 GPA, scholarly project, and completion of high-quality work within established timeframes, often well-ahead of deadlines. Mary Claire is innovative, self-directed, collaborative, and able to apply theory to practice. She has a passion for improving outcomes in the academic and practice environments. For example, she collaborated to co-design a simulated case study specific to HSL students around crucial situations that leaders often must navigate but don't necessarily feel prepared to do which is being piloted currently. Mary Claire's genuine enthusiasm, determination, and ability to organize/synthesize information at a high-level often engages others in the process of learning and doing. These qualities have resulted in her going above and beyond in her assignments to bring additional relevance, not only to her own understanding but to the understanding of those around her. For example, through various disseminations and attendance at conferences, Mary Claire has been able to broaden and deepen key stakeholder understanding regarding the focus of her doctoral project, firearm injury prevention. Disseminations have included being 1 of 2 KCON graduate students invited to present her DNP Scholarly Project at the 3-Minute Thesis Competition hosted by the GVSU Graduate Programs in February 2024. She has participated in several presentations with local workgroups while conducting her scholarly project. She was invited to be a podium presenter at the 2024 statewide home visiting conference and intends to submit a manuscript to the Journal of Public Health on 3/15/2024. Her project has been recognized in the community for its transformative work on gun safety, and she has been asked to continue her work after graduation in Kent County. Mary Claire is a well-rounded, relational leader. She currently serves as the President for the KCON GSO. Her dedication to DEIB has resulted in an upcoming March 2024 workshop promoting understanding and dialogue amongst graduate students on this critically important topic. Mary Claire has also worked as a Research Assistant with Dr. Della Hughes and has disseminated work under this role in the form of a poster at the Reach Higher 2023 Showcase. She is a GVSU Cook Leadership Fellow and represented KCON in the AACN Nursing National Policy Summit in Washington, D.C.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR
OUTSTANDING MASTER'S THESIS
Winter 2024**

College of Health Professions

- ❖ **Tabor Gleason, Master of Science in Clinical Dietetics**
 - **Thesis Title:** Relative Energy Deficiency (RED-S) in Sport
 - **Thesis Committee:** Jennifer Ford (Chair) – School of Interdisciplinary Health, Emily Welles – School of Interdisciplinary Health, Gerald Shoultz – Statistics Department

Tabor's thesis is a significant contribution to the dietetic profession, even reaching the high quality of a publishable work. RED-S research enhances dietetic practice through developing evidenced based guidelines for medical nutrition therapy (MNT), shapes public policy, educates medical professionals and interdisciplinary teams and advances knowledge. Moreover, RED-S research encourages the collaboration among registered dietitian nutritionists, college coaches, and athletics trainers. Tabor's scholarly work provides an understanding of RED-S, creates an awareness, and impacts the management of RED-S, which promotes the health and performance of collegiate athletes.

Tabor's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Physiological interactions between low energy intake, reproductive dysfunction and bone deterioration are known as Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S).¹ RED-S can result in bone injuries, menstrual disturbances, and negative energy balance.² Despite these consequences, RED-S awareness is low in the athletics community, resulting in athletes going without treatment and suffering consequences to their health.¹ The purpose of this study is to explore the associations between RED-S and key factors that may contribute to nutrition status in the collegiate setting. This study aimed to increase understanding of RED-S across collegiate sports to identify key areas of prevention and intervention by the athletics healthcare team to support athletes at risk. Participants included 175 female varsity student athletes from Grand Valley State University. Quantitative survey data analysis was completed. Survey content included menstrual cycle history, bone injuries, and nutritional status. Each athlete was given a RED-S score by assigning numerical points to survey questions and calculating a cumulative number. Kruskal– Wallis tests were used to determine the research questions' outcomes. The research questions included determining whether RED-S scores were associated with the type of sport the athlete played, the age the athlete began playing the sport, and whether they had received performance nutrition education. The data do indicate that the distribution of RED-S scores for collegiate athletes differs between age groups ($p = <0.001$). Athletes who started their sport at younger ages tended to have lower RED-S scores than athletes who started their sport at an older age. Further research on this topic will increase understanding of the relationship between the age an athlete began playing their sport and their RED-S status while participating in college athletics. This knowledge will inform stakeholders on the risks of RED-S and benefits of screening and prevention, as well as support the need for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) to be an integral part of the collegiate athletics health care team.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Genevieve Wisby, Master of Science in Engineering**

- **Thesis Title:** A comparative Study of Median Nerve Pressure with Different Gloves in Cycling
- **Thesis Committee:** Wendy Reffeor (Chair) – School of Engineering, Yunju Lee – Physical Therapy and Athletic Training Department, Jeanine Beasley – Occupational Science & Therapy Department

Genevieve is an extremely motivated and talented student who clearly designed her research, efficiently executed data gathering, and effectively analyzed the data to draw accurate and useful conclusions. Her commitment to high quality of work is shown. Genevieve is extremely driven and self-sufficient while understanding when to request help from others to ensure her success. She reached out to the Statistics Center to ensure her research was properly conducted and statistically significant, the Writing Center to ensure her writing is clear and concise, and her advisors for advice when needed. Genevieve's thesis was incredibly well written. She conducted an excellent and thorough literature review, which led her to the research that was needed and well executed.

Genevieve's abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a prevalent condition characterized by the compression or irritation of the median nerve within the narrow passageway of the carpal tunnel at the wrist. While cycling offers numerous health benefits, it also presents potential risk factors for the development or exacerbation of carpal tunnel issues. Cyclists frequently utilize gloves to mitigate these risks, as specialized cycling gloves provide essential protection and comfort by minimizing friction, vibrations, and pressure on the hands during rides. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of median nerve relief sport gloves in reducing median nerve pressure during cycling compared to glove-free conditions and traditional biking gloves. In a pilot study involving thirteen participants, two types of gloves were assessed alongside bare-handed conditions during kneeling pressure tests and low intensity cycling. Analysis revealed that for bare-handed conditions, the peak pressure was typically observed between the thenar and hypothenar eminence, where the median nerve traverses through the palm of the hand. The average pressure on the median nerve area of interest across all subjects was 51.96 kPa (range: 30.02 – 70.12 kPa). While typical gloves showed no significant impact on the pressure of interest, median nerve relief sport gloves demonstrated a notable reduction in pressure, with an average of 20.23 kPa (range: 7.26 – 36.83 kPa), corresponding to a 61% decrease in median nerve pressure during cycling. These findings underscore the potential efficacy of median nerve relief sport gloves in alleviating pressure on the median nerve during cycling activities.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
OUTSTANDING FINAL PROJECT
Winter 2024**

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ **Devan Bridget, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**
 - **Project Title:** Moving Secondary Students from Foundational Literacy to Critical Literacy

Devan has worked diligently in developing her final project. Being an advocate for her secondary students, and recognizing that too many students exit high school with only foundational literacy skills and continue on to be lifelong readers, she created a project featuring student-centered curriculum that spans 18 weeks with five units of study with the goal of increasing student engagement through the implementations of: independent reading with intention, student choice, time to read in class, and carefully selected texts that are balanced and scaffolded for learning. She ground all of her ideas in literacy research, but she contributed to the field with original work that can be implemented in the classroom with students.

Devan's abstract is on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Too many students exit high school with only foundational literacy skills, and few students continue on to be lifelong readers. The main factor in this issue is a lack of engagement for students in the classroom. Due to policies and expectations, teachers have felt the pressure to focus on a standardized test-preparation based curriculum, instead of a student-centered curriculum, which has contributed to student disengagement. For this project, Transactional/Reader Response Theory and Critical Literacy theory frame the research, findings, and creation of a solution to address this problem of disengagement. The project features a student-centered curriculum that spans 18 weeks and features five units of study. The goal of this project is to increase student engagement through the implementation of independent reading with intention, student choice, time to read in class, and carefully selected texts that are balanced and scaffolded for learning. Other evidenced-based instructional choices in the project include: opportunities for student talk, authentic reading and writing experiences, and essential questions crafted to create transfer throughout the semester curriculum. A rich literacy environment where students feel a part of the learning community will be fostered through collaborative book clubs and engaging student accountability tasks and assessments.

❖ **Nicole Sutton, Master of Social Work**

- **Project Title:** Sex Offender Treatment Panel: An Ethical Approach

Nicole has demonstrated excellence for her project, "Sex Offender Treatment Panel: An Ethical Approach" which has exemplified excellence in its conception, merit, significance, and presentation. The project, aimed at addressing the crucial yet often overlooked issue of empathy towards sex offenders within the social work profession, is both timely and vital. Social work professionals are required through the NASW Code of Ethics to respect the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals. Nicole recognized the difficulty many social workers have demonstrating compassion for the sex offender population, often leading to worse treatment outcomes. Her initiative in organizing a panel of experts to discuss best practices, myths, and barriers to success with sex offender treatment is commendable. Due to Nicole's project, 36 social work professionals and students participated in the live training through the GVSU Social Work Continuing Education Program. The expectation is that 100s will participate over the next two years, ensuring a wide-reaching impact in the greater Grand Rapids community and social work profession.

ABSTRACT

The NASW Code of Ethics requires that practitioners respect the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals, yet many social workers struggle to empathize with sex offenders. This is concerning because most will work with a sex offender at some point in their career. Empathy training and preparation are needed. In this project, *Supporting the Sex Offender Panel*, sex offender treatment practitioners discussed best practices, myths, and barriers to success when working with this population. 36 social work professionals and students participated in the live training. In addition, the recording and materials are available through the GVSU Social Work Continuing Education Program for the next two years. The aim is to increase empathy for sex offenders among social workers to improve treatment outcomes.

❖ **Danielle DeJonge, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**

- **Project Title:** Adolescents of Refugee Background in Public Libraries

De Jonge developed a project titled Adolescents of Refugee Background in Public Libraries, which is a novel topic in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). She is a strong advocate for refugee young adults. Her passion for this segment of the English learner population has led her to develop this project in which she argues that refugee adolescents go through multiple transitions that affect identity while settling in the United States. Because schools despite their endeavors to be inclusive fail to effectively accommodate refugee adolescents, a multimodal third space has to be created to facilitate and socialize them in US communities. The uniqueness of her project lies in the fact that she uses the theory of funds of identity, which captures adolescent refugee complexity identity formation, to develop tools and resources that librarians can use to assist refugee adolescents. Her project builds on transformative education in a creative way by showing how makerspaces can be community hubs for refugee adolescents.

ABSTRACT

Refugee adolescents go through multiple transitions that affect identity while settling in their new country of relocation. The ability to recognize the complexity of identity in a healthy way is fostered by safe spaces of belonging that encourage agency. Libraries, as spaces already effectively serving diverse populations including refugee youth, have the resources to be a safe space for these adolescents. One resource that has been trending in libraries is a makerspace. Makerspaces offer multimodal activities, whether they be arts-based or STEM-based, that not only encourage critical thought, but also allow for development of belonging and agency for healthy dynamic identity formation. Using a funds of identity and space-making theoretical framework, this project gathered data from empirical studies to establish what safe spaces for healthy identity formation for refugee youth look like, how makerspaces can be constructed to fit these requirements, and what positive outcomes in healthy identity formation might result. Spaces for healthy refugee identity formation are spaces that create belonging through community, and agency through the ability to do collaborative multimodal activities that are strengths-based. Establishing a quality makerspace for refugee youth would contain refugee-centered research to create what tools and resources would be available and could have residual benefits for the library staff and patrons in building capacity. These findings result in a guidebook for public libraries on how to establish a makerspace that specifically caters to refugee identity formation to empower and amplify refugee adolescent voices amidst transition.

❖ **Cion Swoope, Master of Education in Higher Education**

- **Project Title:** A Workshop Curriculum for Student Loan Debt

Cion has shown remarkable persistence and ambition in his work. His project identifies an urgent and relevant problem in higher education and uses an innovative, effective theoretical approach to explore the problem. Cion's capstone project explores the variable impact of student loan debt on different populations, using a combination of Becker's Human Capital Theory and Crenshaw's theory of Intersectionality. With great tact and attention to detail, Cion outlines through the former theoretical lens how student loans and consequent debt might be perceived as an investment in human capital. Cion goes on to complicate such a proposition, arguing that the latter theoretical lens reveals the complex avenues by which systems of oppression intersect across categories of identity. In short, though student loan debt might be considered an investment in human capital when all else is equal, intersectionality reveals that different holders of student loan debt are impacted by such debt differently. Cion supports this argument with dozens of citations and sources and uses his in-depth analysis to support a thoughtful student affairs intervention that seeks to assist loan-holding students as they manage their debt, future earnings, and options to balance various credits and debits on their future accounts.

ABSTRACT

For many college students, taking out student loans is a necessary step towards higher education, yet it often leads to accumulated debt that can seem insurmountable. This project intends to investigate the implications of student loan debt, such as homeownership, household debt, and other life goals, and educate borrowers on the potential repercussions. Using Becker's (1993) Human Capital theory, I examine the investment logic behind student loan borrowing, framing debt as a calculated risk for future gain. This project also uses Crenshaw's (1989) Intersectionality theory to extend beyond the scope of the average borrower and highlight the demographic groups most disproportionately impacted by student loan debt. In response to the challenges of repaying student loans, a workshop on student loan debt was developed with a dual focus: to enhance financial literacy and to navigate the intricacies of debt that may be amplified by individual identity or specific circumstances. The workshop focuses on arming student loan borrowers with essential strategies for effective debt management. The project seeks to mitigate the immediate burdens of student loan debt and contribute to a broader cultural shift toward financial literacy and empowerment among recent graduates.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Kaitlyn Sallans Haack, Master of Science in Engineering**

- **Project Title:** Redesign of Model Setup of Shrouded Turbine Blade to Decrease Stresses Casting Process

Kaitlyn has consistently demonstrated outstanding academic performance and a strong commitment to excellence in her coursework, research. She successfully finished the company-sponsored project “Redesign of Model Setup of Shrouded Turbine Blade to Decrease Stresses Casting Process”. She approaches challenges with a blend of analytical rigor and imaginative thinking, resulting in projects that not only meet the specified requirements but often exceed expectations.

ABSTRACT

An inherent risk to the investment casting process is the buildup of stress in the mold. For investment cast turbine blades, this can lead to distortion of the final product, causing dimensional nonconformances. The gating scheme chosen for the mold has a strong effect on the location and magnitude of the stress experienced by the castings. This project focuses on a thin, shrouded Rolls Royce blade that exhibits a pattern of dimensional distortion relative to position on the mold. Blades such as this are sensitive to casting stress, so the gating scheme is a particularly important consideration in the mold design. Finite element analysis software was used to provide insight on the root cause of the stresses within the mold during the casting process. Multiple models were created to test potential alternative gating schemes that may have a reduced impact on the dimensions of the part. These alternatives were subsequently compared to the current design, demonstrating the impact they have on altering the stress condition in the mold. Analysis of the alternative designs showed that while changing the location of the gating influenced which casting position experienced the most stress, increasing the angle of the down feed relative to the castings minimized the magnitude of the stress within the castings.

❖ **Marwah Talbeh, Master of Science in Health Informatics and Bioinformatics**

- **Project Title:** Analyzing Ethnicity and Breast Cancer Risk Through Logistic Regression

Marwah's dedication to her studies and her project is evident. Her project was grounded in a real-world health concern, highlighting her ability to identify and address significant research questions. The project's merit lies in its thorough analysis and the adept application of statistical methods to uncover vital insights, demonstrating Marwah's mastery of the subject matter. The significance of her work is reflected in its potential to contribute to the understanding of breast cancer risks across different ethnicities, showcasing the practical relevance of her research. Marwah's presentation of her findings was exemplary, characterized by clarity and the effective communication of complex information, making her research accessible to a broad audience.

ABSTRACT

Background: Breast cancer remains the predominant cancer affecting women globally, with about 30% of women diagnosed during their lifetime. This study aims to shed light on the complex interplay of risk factors contributing to breast cancer, utilizing the Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium (BCSC) dataset. Early detection remains critical for improving survival rates, making the identification of these risk factors paramount for preventive care. **Aim:** The study aims to analyze and visualize various risk factors for breast cancer, drawing from data collected between 2015 and 2017, to pinpoint the most significant ones and predict the likelihood of breast cancer based on their combinations. **Methods:** Employing data from the BCSC, the research utilized statistical analysis, including Kruskal-Wallis and logistic regression, on a dataset refined to 82,407 entries after preprocessing. The dataset featured attributes such as age, ethnicity, reproductive history, and body mass index (BMI), among others. **Results:** Key findings include the identification of age, ethnicity, family history, menopause status, BMI, and age at first birth as significant predictors of breast cancer risk. Notably, age was a significant factor, with women aged 50-54 experiencing a 0.765 increase in log odds of breast cancer, and those 65-69 showing a 1.420 increase. Ethnicity also influenced risk, with non-Hispanic white women exhibiting higher incidence rates. Menopause status and BMI were additional contributors, with postmenopausal women and those with a BMI of 30 or more showing varied risks. Surprisingly, age at first birth was not a significant predictor when analyzed alongside other variables.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Katie Black, Kyra Shaw, Ellie Willemin, Master of Science in Clinical Dietetics**

- **Project Title:** Healthcare Professionals' Knowledge and Utilization of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists as Part of the Interdisciplinary Team

This research study aims to assess perceptions of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) among mid-level medical providers and investigate the knowledge and utilization of RDNs in an interdisciplinary team regarding mid-level medical providers.

Their abstract is on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Background: Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) play a crucial role in the interdisciplinary healthcare team. The RDN scope of practice (SOP) includes nutrition-focused physical exams, swallow screens, and placing small bore feeding tubes. Here, the RDN SOP may be overlooked due to interprofessional communication barriers, interprofessional team knowledge of the RDN SOP, overlapping scopes of practice, and the RDN referral process.

Research Objective: This research study aims to assess perceptions of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) among mid-level medical providers and investigate the knowledge and utilization of RDNs in an interdisciplinary team regarding mid-level medical providers. **Research Design:** This is a mixed methods research study. **Methods:** The research consisted of a survey taken by Grand Valley State University (GVSU) alumni who are currently practicing as registered nurses, speech-language pathologists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, or physicians. Participants were recruited to take the survey via social media or by email from the faculty administration of the included disciplines. Qualitative and quantitative data in the survey were collected via Qualtrics, exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and analyzed.

Results: This survey had 64 participants. SLP (2), RN (27), physician (3), NP (5), PA (24), RN and PA (1), and clinical nurse specialist (1). The mean response when asked "How confident are you in the specific roles within the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) scope of practice? - 0, zero knowledge. 100, complete knowledge" was 56.95%. 63.1% were not aware that placing small bore feeding tubes is a role within the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) scope of practice. 58.5% were not aware that performing swallow screens is a role within the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) scope of practice. Statistical significance between knowledge of the RDN SOP and age was ($p = 0.794$). Statistical significance between knowledge of the RDN SOP and profession was ($p = 0.559$). (11.8%) participants reported referring patients to an RDN often/daily. (24.6%) participants reported having a lack of RDN availability/facility does not have RDNs as referral barriers. Common themes associated with the benefits of the RDN in an IDT are enteral and parenteral nutrition, providing diabetes education, and helpful in aiding in wound healing and recovery. Common themes associated with referral/ communication barriers include lack of RDN availability, lack of insurance coverage, that another team member can perform the same duties, and overall no referral barriers.

Conclusions: The results from this study found that there is no strong evidence of either high or low confidence in the knowledge of RDN scope of practice (including swallow screens and SBFT placement) amongst interdisciplinary team members. This study aligns with previous research that the referral barriers to the RDN profession have to do with lack of access to an RDN, patient limitations, and being unaware of the services an RDN provides.

❖ **Julia Clover & Ashley Teltow, Master of Science in Clinical Dietetics**

- **Project Title:** Holistic Admissions in ACEND-accredited dietetic graduate education programs

Julia and Ashley both have completed their master's research project on Holistic Admissions in ACEND-accredited dietetic graduate education programs which embodies a high standard of quality and impact. Holistic admissions and diversity in dietetics education programs as well as diversity in the dietetics profession are significant emerging issues. Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) play a vital role in addressing chronic diseases. However, these chronic diseases disproportionately impact communities of color, and the dietetic profession currently and historically lacks diversity with 73% of RDNs identifying as White female. Consequently, a growing amount of minority groups are being misrepresented in healthcare leading to poor health outcomes and increasing health disparities. Therefore, increasing diversity in dietetic education programs is essential to meet the needs of our growing diverse population. Adopting and implementing holistic admission processes has been associated with increasing diversity in health profession programs. Examining graduate admission practices among dietetic education programs is crucial. Their research is important and contributes to the dietetics profession as RDNs are working towards a more inclusive future dietetics.

Their abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Background: The United States (US) population is rapidly becoming more diverse. The rise in diversity also increases the demand for a more diverse healthcare workforce to embody the differences that exist among specific population groups. The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) reports the dietetic profession consists of 93% female and 82%White. Consequently, a growing amount of minority groups are being misrepresented in healthcare leading to poor health outcomes and increasing health disparities. Methods: This study is a quantitative research design that used a quantitative survey technique to gather data from program directors (PDs) of ACEND-accredited graduate dietetic education programs about the prevalence, barriers, and diversity in using holistic admissions. Publicly available email addresses for all PDs of coordinated graduate programs and graduate programs were gathered from the ACEND Accredited Program Directory by selecting country, state, and program type on the ACEND website. An email blast was sent to all PDs which contained the study recruitment text, and a Qualtrics survey link with the consent embedded in the Qualtrics survey. Qualtrics was used to generate descriptive statistics which provided counts, percentages, and frequencies. The study was approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board of Grand Valley State University. Results: Of the 42 participating PDs, 47.4% reported using holistic admissions processes at their institution and 39.4% were unsure if they used holistic admissions processes.

❖ **Erin Colling, Shae Hand, & Hannah Doerr, Master of Science in Clinical Dietetics**

- **Project Title:** Analysis of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs on transgender nutrition care in Michigan.

Their research investigated the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about transgender patient care among Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) in Michigan which contributes to the dietetic profession and health professions. The growth of the transgender population and the marked health disparities seen among LGBTQ populations have highlighted the need for change and greater education about minority populations in the healthcare systems. As recognition of the disparities facing transgender people has grown, so have the demands for medical providers to receive more training about cultural competency and standards of medical care for transgender patients. Patient-centered care practices have been linked to improvements in a variety of health conditions, better ratings of care, and improved quality of life. In the dietetic profession, there are no specific transgender standards of nutrition practice for RDNs at the national and local levels. Their research is publishable and shows that transgender patients have unique healthcare needs. In addition, there is a significant need for standardized transgender nutrition care, educational competencies, and treatment guidelines as well as a need for increased training opportunities for RDNs in the field.

Their abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The percentage of the population who identify as transgender is estimated to be 0.7-1.0%. Transgender patients have unique biological and psychosocial healthcare needs. Studies show that most medical education programs dedicate almost no time in their curricula to this topic. This includes programs that train registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs). Appropriate, patient-centered care is associated with significant improvements in patients' health outcomes but currently, there is no standardized transgender education for RDNs. This knowledge gap creates a barrier for transgender patients to receive quality healthcare. **Methods:** This study used a quantitative survey sent through Qualtrics to gather information about participants' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs on transgender nutrition care. An email blast that contained the study recruitment text, Qualtrics survey link, and consent was sent by the president of the Michigan Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MiAND) to all members. Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Cross-tabulations with chi-square analysis were completed to determine if there were statistically significant differences. The study was approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board of Grand Valley State University **Results:** Half of the survey participants reported never having been involved in the treatment of a transgender patient. Sixty-nine percent stated that they had not received education or training regarding transgender healthcare. 70.3% of respondents agreed that they would need better education to provide appropriate medical care. Similarly, 85% of respondents affirmed that transgender patients have unique health risks and needs. **Conclusions:** Transgender patients have unique healthcare needs and RDNs need appropriate education and training in transgender nutrition care. There is a significant need for standardized educational competencies and treatment guidelines as well as a need for increased training opportunities for RDNs in the field.

- ❖ **Ashley Flores, Levi Harmon, and Alec Walstra, Doctor of Physical Therapy**
 - **Project Title:** Quantifying Biomechanical Differences: A Pilot Study Comparing Tennis Strokes in Professional and Non-Professional Players

The individuals demonstrated exceptional initiative in leading the project from start to finish. This included navigating the IRB process, developing the research design, collecting and analyzing data, and culminating in a presentation at a national conference. Their dedication was especially impressive. They recruited subjects and collected data throughout last summer (outdoors at Allendale campus) and this winter (indoors facility), even dedicating their weekends to the project. The success of the project was due to their objective support and collaboration. The project demonstrates a strong research methodology and has the potential to improve training techniques and prevent injuries in tennis players, making it a significant contribution to the field.

ABSTRACT

Xsens MVN motion capture device (Movella Inc., Netherlands) is an inertial measurement unit (IMU) that uses inertial sensors, including accelerometers, gyroscopes, and magnetometers to provide objective, quantitative data on joint angles, acceleration, body posture, balance, and coordination to monitor athlete performance in a natural training environment [1]. Previous research has shown that there is a discrepancy in performance between tennis players of different skill levels; however there has been little exploration of the biomechanical positioning and efficiency of these players. Additionally, there is lack of biomechanical analysis of tennis forehand and backhand strokes is lacking in current literature. Further research is required to determine how skill level, age, and/or sex affect the understanding of serve and stroke mechanics for performance improvement [2]. The purpose of this study was to compare the joint angles of upper and lower extremities between professional and non-professional tennis players to determine the biomechanical differences in performance during various tennis strokes. We expected professional players to have refined technical ability and consistent joint angle optimization due to their increased skill level and playing experience.

❖ **Teneisha McDonald, Master of Public Health**

- **Project Title:** Community Mapping: A Tool Connecting Detroit Urban Farms to the Community

Teneisha has shown a passion and commitment to addressing food insecurity, mainly in Black and Hispanic households. Her study aims to identify urban agricultural sites within Detroit, Michigan, specifically black urban farms, gardens, and farmer's markets, to develop a series of community maps. The names and locations of urban farms and community gardens were identified using multiple annual reports, Google searches, and social media sites. Of 101 sites, 31 met the inclusion criteria and were confirmed using Google Maps to analyze sites for the presence of food production digitally. With Google Maps, an interactive community map was created using the addresses of verified sites to mark each location, allowing users to locate farms and gardens near their homes. The community map developed for the study provides the opportunity to collaborate with community members in the future for continuous updates to identify new sites and improve accuracy.

Their abstract appears on the next page.

ABSTRACT

Food insecurity disproportionately affects a number of communities in the United States, mainly Black and Hispanic households. Urban agriculture is a helpful resource for improving food security in communities that lack access to affordable healthy, fresh foods. Increasing awareness of existing urban farms and gardens within proximity throughout Detroit with tools such as community mapping can contribute to the growing number of community resources designed to combat food insecurity. Methods: This study aims to identify urban agricultural sites within Detroit, Michigan, specifically, black urban farms, gardens, and farmer's markets, to develop a series of community maps. The names and locations of urban farms and community gardens were identified utilizing multiple annual reports, Google searches, and social media sites. Results: Of 101 sites, a total of 31 sites met the inclusion criteria and were confirmed using Google Maps to analyze sites for the presence of food production digitally. With Google Maps, an interactive community map was created using the addresses of verified sites to mark each location, allowing users to locate farms and gardens near their homes. Conclusion: The community map developed in this study provides the opportunity to collaborate with community members in the future for continuous updates to identify new sites and improve accuracy.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Mary Kooyer, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

- **Project Title:** Implementation of a Team-Based Care Model for Effective Nurse Practitioner Utilization, Chronic Care Management, and Increased Annual Patient Visits

Mary's project exemplifies the core values and competencies outlined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. She demonstrated remarkable initiative by identifying a crucial need within a prominent healthcare system in West Michigan and collaborated effectively with an interprofessional enhance patient care quality in the primary care setting.

ABSTRACT

A project development initiative was undertaken in a mid-size primary care practice in the Midwest after conducting a thorough assessment of the practice and patient needs. The aims of the program development project for team-based care model implementation were to improve the following elements: Effective NP utilization, chronic care management, and increased annual wellness visit completion. The project included a) implementing a standardized NP schedule template and b) fostering a team-based schedule workflow to address the need to increase annual patient visits and effectively utilize their NP to the full scope of practice. Results: Effective NP utilization was measured by the successful implementation of a standardized NP schedule template. Before the implementation of the schedule template, the NP was in a restricted model of care practice, was only being utilized for same-day appointments, and was not providing complex chronic disease management. Post-implementation data show the NP moved from a restricted model of practice to one of co-management resulting in an increase in completed annual wellness visits (AWVs) and an increase in scheduled follow-up appointments with the NP for chronic disease management. The data was analyzed using a paired samples T-test revealing a significant difference (p-value of < .001) in the number of AWVs completed when comparing pre-implementation and post-implementation data.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Esi Aniwa, Master of Science in Communications**

- **Project Title:** The Impact of Organizational Communication in Employee Retention

Esi explores what it means to maintain a stable workforce as an essential ingredient for long-term sustainability and success of an organization. The project points out that effective organizational communication plays a central role in achieving employee retention by contributing to engagement and job satisfaction which are crucial factors influencing an employee's decision to stay with a company. The project concludes by identifying communication strategies that can result in an environment conducive to long-term employee commitment and satisfaction. This is a complex, multi-step project that is sophisticated in its scope and is at the forefront of research in the communication field. Esi is a highly capable communication scholar who has the professional drive, determination, curiosity, and ambition that will make her successful in the communication field.

ABSTRACT

Maintaining a stable workforce is crucial for employers as it directly impacts the long-term sustainability and success of the organization. Employee retention is cost-effective compared to hiring and training new staff frequently. Moreover, retention enhances institutional memory, productivity, and the overall positive reputation of an organization. Effective organizational communication plays a pivotal role in achieving employee retention by contributing to engagement and job satisfaction which are crucial factors influencing an employee's decision to stay with a company. In view of these, this project explores the role, relationship, and diverse communication theories within organizational communication that play a vital role in retaining employees over an extended period. This project identifies communication strategies that can be leveraged to create an environment conducive to long-term employee commitment and satisfaction.

- ❖ **Zane Walters, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**
 - **Project Title:** Monitoring Sars-Cov-2 Evolution Through Targeted Next-Gen Sequencing of Wastewater Extracts In Kent County

For his internship project, Zane worked to refine a method to track the dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 variants in real-time by sequencing a region of the Spike protein in extracts of wastewater. Zane is an excellent communicator and he forged strong working relationships with collaborators at the University of Missouri, the Kent County and Northern Michigan Health Departments, as well as our own Master of Applied Computing program. He helped design and completed a project that assessed our method's accuracy over different conditions, and led our efforts to develop analytical tools to quickly summarize and visualize the results for health department staff. Because of the expertise and leadership skills he developed with his project, Zane currently is working for the Northern Michigan Health Department to analyze sequencing data and clearly display the variants that circulated within northern counties of the lower peninsula for the past few years.

ABSTRACT

PURPOSE: As clinical testing rates decline, wastewater monitoring for SARS-CoV-2 has become an important method of estimating community spread. Wastewater extracts can be used to determine variant composition through sequencing. The aim of our work was to trace the emergence, and sometimes the following disappearance, of SARS-CoV-2 variants. **METHODS AND MATERIALS:** Since Sept. 2022, we monitored the SARS-CoV-2 variant composition in Kent County wastewater through targeted Next-Gen sequencing of the Receptor Binding Domain (RBD) of the S-gene. **ANALYSES:** Mutations were identified by comparing the resultant sequences with the SARS-CoV-2 Wuhan (original) wild type variant. Mutations were then compared by Python program with sequences deposited in global databases to identify recognized and named variants. **RESULTS:** Results show our methodology was successful in tracking variant emergence. Most recently, we identified the emergence of JN.1*, which has become the dominant variant. **CONCLUSIONS:** We conclude that targeted sequencing of the RBD region of the S-gene by next-gen sequencing is an accurate, timely, and cost-effective means of SARS-CoV-2 variant monitoring from sewer samples.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATIONS FOR
OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION
Winter 2024**

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Anton Petrenko, Master of Science in Engineering**

- **Publication Title:** The Effect of Pulsed Power During Electrochemical Surface Modification on the Wettability of Aluminum and Titanium Alloy
- **Co-Authors:** Abishek Balsamy Kamaraj – School of Engineering

Anton's work focused on the electrochemical surface modification of aluminum and titanium alloys and understanding the wettability of these surfaces. This was an innovative project for his team, which presented challenges, including the lack of an established experimental setup for the research study. He faced these challenges head-on, including successfully built an experimental system entirely from scratch, and overcame them to finish the study within the semester deadlines. This work led to new findings on the effect of pulsed voltages during electrochemical surface modifications, and the findings were submitted as a paper for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' International Mechanical Engineering Congress & Exposition 2023 conference. Anton's work was accepted for the conference and was even considered to be fast-tracked for publication in the Journal of Micro and Nano Manufacturing.

Anton's abstract appears on the next page

ABSTRACT

Aluminum and especially titanium alloy are increasingly being used to replace traditional metals in many new applications due to their high strength-to-weight ratio and biocompatibility. Surgical implants need to have a hydrophilic nature when tissue growth is desired, while they need to be hydrophobic if tissue/microbial growth is not expected. Thus, there is a need to control the wettability of these metals. This study used a sodium chlorate electrolyte to control the wettability of 1-inch by 3-inch aluminum and titanium alloy samples using an electrochemical surface modification (ECSM) process. Duty cycle, frequency, and ECSM duration were modified while voltage was held constant at 10 V. Duty cycles of 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% (or direct current) and frequencies of 1 kHz and 100 kHz were used. The time of processing was changed to allow samples to have an equal active time with 2000, 1000, 667, and 500 seconds for 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% duty cycles, respectively. A first principles-based theoretical model was developed in this study to predict the pulse power setting needed to achieve the desired wettability in the samples by measuring the sample mass before and after ECSM. The model was validated with experimental results. The surface's wettability switched from super hydrophilic to hydrophilic after the sample was heated in a furnace. Both the metals showed a change in contact angle behavior after evaporation of the residual water. This study allows for the use of ECSM as a technique to modify the surface of implants with controlled wettability for improved osseointegration.

❖ **Astha Thapa, Master of Science in Applied Computer Science**

- **Publication Title:** ChatGPT based ChatBot Application

Astha has been described to be a person with exemplary focus, dedication, and sincerity towards her work. Her recent publication, titled “ChatGPT based ChatBot Application” involved steep learning curve, where she had to learn Graph databases, Cypher query languages, training ChatGPT using prompts etc. She was able to quickly adapt and pickup these new skills, which led her to successfully implement and publish a prototype system in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers’s Southeast Conference. Astha’s passion also extends to pushing herself outside of her comfort zone, to learn and embrace new tools and techniques with curiosity and enthusiasm. Outside of her publication, Astha’s work in a few other projects is just as equally noteworthy.

ABSTRACT

Since the invention of ChatGPT, there have been several applications demonstrating how ChatGPT can be used to solve real world problems. This paper focuses on implementing one such application, where we design ChatBot using ChatGPT API. To carry out the experiments, we choose dataset from a specific domain, and store the data in graph-oriented database. Sample training dataset consisting of English and its equivalent Cypher queries were designed for prompt tuning ChatGPT on the local Knowledge-graph. This training dataset helps ChatGPT understand the mapping between the English and their equivalent Cypher queries. Once the mapping is learnt, it becomes easier for ChatGPT to encode or represent a real time (previously unseen) English query fed by the user into its equivalent Cypher query format. In this paper, we demonstrate our results on sample Rope-related dataset scrapped from internet and conclude with limitations and future work.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Julia Treme, Master of Science in Nursing**

- **Publication Title:** Integrating Adverse Childhood Experiences into Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum: A Scoping Review
- **Co-Authors:** Christina Quick – Kirkhof College of Nursing

Julia's enthusiasm and joy in everything she does is infectious. Her spirit of inquiry and established relationships will continue to have a positive effect on her colleagues as they focus on improving patient outcomes. Faculty and fellow students have been drawn in by her joy of learning as she embraced the community of scholars and her graduate education. Throughout her graduate academic career, Julia has demonstrated high academic standards and collaboration in her role as academic advisor on several publications and presentations related to adverse childhood events and nursing education. She also participated in the development of an inclusive culture in graduate nursing school, which was presented at the REACH HIGHER Showcase 2023. As a veteran, Julia volunteered to mentor and provide peer support to others. With her many hats, she remains focused on her role as academic advisor for KCON, providing a significant amount of support to those incoming students. Julia's outstanding assignments demonstrated excellent writing and presentation skills, in addition to the class discussions and projects that she had contributed and led. Julia's publication, Integrating Adverse Childhood Experiences Into Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum: A Scoping Review is worthy of this recognition.

Julia's abstract appears on the next page

ABSTRACT

Background: Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events occurring in childhood that can have severe effects on health throughout the life span. Quality nursing care includes the knowledge and skills to recognize patients who were exposed to ACEs and respond appropriately.

Method: A scoping review of the literature was conducted as the foundation for implementing ACEs into baccalaureate nursing curricula.

Results: A total of 22 articles were examined and included 15 research studies, two literature reviews, one quality improvement project, and four discussion articles. The literature reflects a prevalence for case-based ACEs content and the importance of student safety measures during content implementation.

Conclusion: Knowledge derived from this review can assist nursing educators to integrate ACEs education into baccalaureate nursing curricula and identify research areas for further investigation.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OR PROFESSION

Winter 2024

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Kendra Avila, Master of Social Work**

Kendra has consistently demonstrated a remarkable commitment to serving the community and advancing the profession. Her commitment to service is evident through her work at AYA Youth Collective, where she has dedicated herself to promoting equity for young people aged 18-24. Through innovative initiatives such as Direct Cash Transfers, Kendra has directly addressed the immediate needs of youth in our community, providing tangible support where it is needed most. Kendra brings a unique blend of leadership, commitment to service, academic success, and ethical practice that has not only contributed to the positive impact of the program but has also significantly impacted the lives of young people in Grand Rapids Michigan. Kendra has utilized the skills and insights gained from her MSW program to advocate for marginalized youth, speaking at two national conferences to train others on best practices for youth-centered case management. Her involvement in implementing Direct Cash Transfers has not only benefited individual youth but has also contributed to broader policy change at the local level, bringing national recognition to the AYA Youth Collective as pioneers in providing youth centered support for young people aging out of foster care, and or experiencing housing instability.

❖ **Angelina Bauer, Master of Education in Literacy Studies**

Mrs. Bauer is a high school teacher who has been mentoring year after year culturally and linguistically diverse young minority students in Saugatuck. Saugatuck is not very racially or ethnically diverse, so the few minority students that they enroll each year tend to seek out for mentorship. She has developed lasting relationships student-athletes and their families. Thanks to her mentorship and support, many have graduated from high school and have attended colleges in Michigan and out of state. In addition to being a mentor, she is deeply involved in community related activities going from officiating, and standing in numerous weddings to hosting showers for many

of her former student-athletes. Mrs. Bauer is a modern language teacher, Spanish, who also coaches track and field athletes. Because of her excellent coaching performances, she was inducted into the Michigan Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches' Association Hall of Fame in 2022. As part of her commitment to assisting culturally and linguistically diverse learners, she does not hesitate to visit homes of struggling students and athletes, often to check in with them on their academic and living needs. On numerous occasions she provided many of them with transportation, food, clothing, and shelter when they had no place to go.

❖ **Sri Rakumari Mendu, Master of Health Administration**

Sri has demonstrated excellence in service to the profession and community especially in interprofessional healthcare and simulations. Working with interprofessional students as a simulation lab assistant, she coordinated the setup and breakdown of simulation scenarios and activities at the GVSU simulation lab. For the Pediatric and Adult Interprofessional case study simulation events (IPE Simulation) where the MHA Program participates, she has developed a marketing campaign and materials for MHA students to enhance their simulation experience. Hosted on the GVSU campus, participants in this IPE event included Ferris State University, Michigan State University, Muskegon Community College, and GVSU. In addition, she is designing simulation experiences and materials and providing administrative leadership to engage graduate students and, in the future, GVSU alumni and other professionals in simulation events through certifications and badges. Educational components of these simulations include leadership, marketing, healthcare law and argumentation, and strategic planning. In addition to the work above, Sri serves home care and hospice patients for the Guardian Angel Home Care and Hospice Program (Rochester, Michigan) for referrals and placements, volunteered with Kent County Community Actions, Kaufman Interfaith Institute, and the Annual Art & Science of Aging Conference sponsored by GVSU while completing her MHA degree requirements and serving as a Graduate Assistant within the MHA department.

❖ **Mark VanderStelt, Master of Public Administration**

For twenty years, Marc has served faithfully in the Norton Shores Police Department, dedicating his life and career to helping strengthen his community. During his time in the Master of Public Administration degree program, Marc has demonstrated both persistence and a passion for learning. Most impressive of all is the dedication he embodies to the value of public service. In August 2023, Lieutenant VanderStelt was promoted within his department, now serving as Chief of Police.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Sam Menzie, Master of Science in Engineering**

Samual possesses a unique blend of intelligence, communication skills, and passion for to improve the quality of care for patients that has enabled him to contribute to two research projects that highlight how engineers can cooperate with other disciplines to improve the practice of medicine. In his short time as a master's student in the College of Engineering and Computing he has made substantial contributions to a project to reduce injuries to labor and delivery nurses and to quantify the benefits of drawing less blood for diagnostics from patients in Intensive Care Units. Samuel's thesis work quantified the risk of each additional mL of blood drawn on a patient becoming anemic and requiring a blood transfusion. In addition, he quantified these risks for different minimum blood volumes required by laboratories carrying out the blood tests. His work will help medical device manufacturers predict the economic viability of devices designed to alleviate the problem.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Raegan Holek, Master of Public Health**

Raegan has demonstrated outstanding service and leadership through her role in the statewide Michigan Public Health Association (MPHA). Raegan first served as Chair-elect and is now currently the Chair of the Student Section for MPHA. She has regularly attended the monthly board of directors' meetings since starting her leadership position, providing a student voice for the MPHA. She has worked diligently to promote public health

events and opportunities for students in her MPHA role. She regularly sends communications of events and career development opportunities to the student section members and works to engage new and existing members. She helped to plan and co-moderate a webinar that included presentations from four public health professionals in Michigan to provide a career development opportunity for students. As Raegan will be graduating soon, she has been working to recruit new student section leaders to serve on the student section for the MPHA. I have been able to observe her transition into the role of mentor of the new student section leadership. She is responsive and encouraging, and it is because of her commitment that the leadership transition will be smooth and support continued success of the MPHA student section. Raegan has also volunteered to support the MPHA Statewide Annual Epidemiology conference both last year and now this year. She is a member of the Michigan Epidemiology conference planning committee and has been a consistent voice for students and promoting student involvement in the conference. She has volunteered to serve in many capacities (e.g., conference promotion and sponsorship, recruiting speakers, serving as moderator for the conference plenary session this year) to support the planning and success of the annual conference. Her consistent professionalism and collaborative attitude throughout her leadership and service is noteworthy. Beyond her commitment to service and leadership, Raegan is an excellent student, demonstrating academic excellence in all her graduate courses and her public health master's research project.

❖ **Alyssa Misiak, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Alyssa's work with the American Physical Therapy Association Michigan has been outstanding in every way. Her impact on her peers for the importance of membership and advocacy from within the organization cannot be overstated. Alyssa is very well-liked and well-respected by the faculty and by her peers. She is friendly, supportive, and genuinely interested in others. She is warm, inclusive, and playful in her approach to her peers. Alyssa embodies servant leadership and is continually finding ways to serve her community,

program, and professional association. Although she performs well academically, she commits a significant amount of her time and energy to serving others and being engaged in numerous other activities outside the classroom. Through her strong work ethic, she has managed to balance a diverse range of commitments, interests, and priorities while remaining a very successful student and while maintaining excellent social relationships with her family, friends, and classmates.

❖ **Robert Page, Doctor of Audiology**

Robert is a committed Doctor of Audiology student. Even before starting in the Doctor of Audiology program Robert was working with the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), Grand Rapids Chapter and Cochlear Americas to provide services to the greater community with hearing loss. Robert worked hard to establish a hearing assistive technology cart/display for HLAA. He also volunteers to talk with cochlear implant candidates about his experience to support their journey. In addition to volunteering his time to support people with hearing loss, Robert has also been actively engaged in Special Olympics Michigan. He also volunteered at Special Olympics events across Michigan, including events in Detroit (international Special Olympics event), Flint, and Escanaba. Robert was routinely enthusiastic at these events, while also maintaining a focus to efficiently move the athletes through the screening program so they could return to their team and the sporting events. In addition to Healthy Hearing, Robert also volunteered his time in a new program, Special Olympics Healthy Young Athletes. In this program, Robert gained experience in screening the hearing of children ages 2-7 years old with suspected or known intellectual disabilities. His consistent commitment to support the Special Olympics athletes at Healthy Hearing and Healthy Young Athletes events gave Robert the confidence and the skills to support people with intellectual disabilities that may seek audiological care in his community.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

❖ **Skye Johnson, Master of Education and Psychological Specialist
in School Psychology**

Skye has been very involved in her school community during her internship this year in Douglas County, Colorado. As an intern at a high school, she is a strong advocate for all students. Skye has even helped students with disabilities by developing and implementing a curriculum focused on their own self-advocacy. She also created infographics for parents and caregivers to help them understand the special education process, individualized education programs, and Section 504 plans. Skye shows great initiative in recognizing issues in schools and problem-solving with teams to develop solutions. She has worked to expand her role beyond that of a traditional school psychologist. Skye provides mental health interventions to individual students experiencing anxiety or depression. Her competence and leadership in this area has been valuable to the students she works with, as well as to their families, her school, and the community.

❖ **Kate Lucas, Master of Science in Biology – Annis Water Resources Institute**

Kate's research is focused on the restoration of a critical coastal wetland feeding into Mona Lake, in Norton Shores, Michigan. This once pristine coastal wetland has been highly enriched in phosphorus from years of farming, which was stopped in the 1990s, and the drained fields allowed to refill. There is now funding to restore this wetland but research is needed to determine the appropriate approach. Kate's research is examining the feasibility of dredging the P-rich sediment as a possible design. This work has huge implications as construction cost is estimated to be ~\$6 million. Hence, her research findings will feed directly into the construction design plan; she is working with the Office of the Muskegon County Water Resources Commissioner, GEI Inc., NOAA, and Progressive AE as part of her thesis research. Kate's research is providing service not only to the partners on this project, but also to community stakeholders, including residents living on these ponds, as well as homeowners on Mona Lake, whose ecological health is directly impacted by the water flowing out of this wetland and into the lake.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO GVSU
Winter 2024**

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Evan Potter, Master of Health Administration**

Evan Potter has demonstrated excellence in multiple ways throughout his graduate education journey. One way he has excelled is in role modeling leadership within the Master of Health Administration program. He joined the program as a combined degree student in his senior year and began to participate in the program's Health Professionals Graduate Student Association his first semester. While still an undergraduate student, he ran for a position in the group and was elected, serving as Finance Officer. He has served as President of the group this past academic year. As an officer in the student group, he accessed funding that supported 10 MHA students in attending a national conference last year and 8 students this year. He has led activities that increased membership in the student group and organized networking opportunities for students in the program. As a student leader in the MHA program, Evan represented student interests to program faculty and helped his fellow students connect with university programs and resources. He held a graduate assistantship that led him to represent the university in various settings, including national conferences and meetings with external stakeholders. While carrying out these activities he also maintained an excellent GPA. In short, Evan has demonstrated excellence in leadership and service to the program and university.

❖ **Grace Roedel, Master of Social Work**

Grace has consistently demonstrated active leadership through her involvement on the board of in the MSW student organization. Grace has played an active role in the development of programming for the student organization and the School of Social Work and has successfully led the MSWSO in a variety of activities that have made the organization visible. She has encouraged and opened space for student participation in the organization and has positively contributed to the image of our program with her leadership. Whether it's spearheading student events, advocating for relevant causes, or assisting peers, Grace has left a significant and positive impact on our campus. Furthermore, Grace's service to GVSU extends beyond her individual achievements. She has played a pivotal role

in fostering a culture of collaboration, inclusivity, and excellence. Her dedication to enhancing the student experience and advancing the mission of our institution is truly commendable. Grace embodies the spirit of leadership and service that this award seeks to honor. Her contributions have enriched the fabric of our university and inspired others to follow in their footsteps. Grace has left behind a legacy of mentorship and excellence, and this award is deservedly hers.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Jessica Doty, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Jess Doty has served her class well in her role as the GVSU Family Health Center/Cherry Health Pro Bono Clinic Coordinator in addition to serving as the WheelRun 5K Committee Coordinator. Additional service activities included: DPT anatomy tutor; Alliance for the Great Lakes Earth Day volunteering and GVSU PT Day of Service Kid's Food Basket volunteering. The extent and depth of her commitment to service to her community and profession is truly outstanding, and she should be recognized for the way in which she has represented GVSU in her service to others.

❖ **Allison Dunn, Master of Clinical Dietetics**

Allison exhibits decisiveness, and mentoring skills and effectively influences others as the co-vice president of Cohort 7's CDSA, she implemented and accomplished the following with the co-vice president and president. Recruited and showcased the CDSA and the clinical dietetics coordinated graduate program in general at campus life night with prizes and trivia for students. Allison has maintained a 3.967 grade point average (GPA) while taking full-time graduate courses, completing 30 hours a week in supervised practice, and volunteering her time as co-vice president of GVSU's Clinical Dietetics Student Association (CDSA). She hosted a successful blood drive in collaboration with Versiti blood bank including tabling for recruitment of donors as well as coordinated cohort bonding activities including hosting cohort breakfast during finals week and a social outing for cohort members to get to know each other outside of classes and practicum. She held monthly meetings with board members to plan events, vote on changes to bylaws, share experiences from supervised practice sites, discuss updates in the dietetics world, and learn from guest speakers. She was Guest speaker from the Center

for Women and Gender Equity to share resources and statistics on food insecurity on college campuses. She organized a panel of new dietitians for our cohort to get advice and ask questions about their experiences in the program, studying for their RD exams, and in their early careers. She advocated for action with MiAND events and to engage with the Academy on social media. She Mentored the undergraduate pre-dietetics club by appearing at a meeting where the club members could ask the CDSA board questions about their experiences in the program, coursework, and areas of interest.

❖ **Anna Dupke, Master of Clinical Dietetics**

Anna inspires trust, is flexible, and fosters potential in other students. She is an individual that capably wears multiple hats. She recruited and showcased the CDSA and the clinical dietetics coordinated graduate program in general at campus life night with prizes and trivia for students. She Coordinated cohort bonding activities including hosting cohort breakfast during finals week and a social outing for cohort members to get to know each other outside of classes and practicum. As a leader, Anna worked with CDSA to held monthly meetings with board members to plan events, vote on changes to bylaws, share experiences from supervised practice sites, discuss updates in the dietetics world, and learn from guest speaker. She organized a panel of new dietitians for our cohort to get advice and ask questions about their experiences in the program, studying for their RD exams, and in their early careers. She also represented her filed and CDSA as a guest speaker from the Center for Women and Gender Equity to share resources and statistics on food insecurity on college campuses.. She advocated for action with MiAND events and to engage with the Academy on social media. She also Mentored the undergraduate pre-dietetics club by appearing at a meeting where the club members could ask the CDSA board questions about their experiences in the program, coursework, and areas of interest.

❖ **Tabor Gleason, Master of Clinical Dietetics**

Tabor leads by example and inspires others to follow. Her strong leadership and ability to clearly communicate expectations resulted in successful advocacy for students as the president of cohort's 7's CDSA. Tabor has maintained a 4.0 grade point average (GPA) while taking full-time graduate courses, completing 30 hours a week in supervised practice, and volunteering her time as co-vice president of GVSU's Clinical Dietetics Student Association (CDSA Tabor exhibits integrity, resilience, and empowerment and as the

president of Cohort 7's CDSA, she implemented and accomplished during her presidency tenure. She recruited and showcased the CDSA and the clinical dietetics coordinated graduate program in general at campus life night with prizes and trivia for students. Tabor also seeks out opportunities to improve the learning environment for everyone, such as being guest speaker from the Center for Women and Gender Equity to share resources and statistics on food insecurity on college campuses. Through exceptional communication with faculty, she advocated for action with MiAND events and to engage with the Academy on social media. Tabor was also instrumental in the representation of Grand Valley at various professional gatherings, including CDSA board, and around the University. For the past three years, she has been a tireless leader. The extent and depth of her commitment to serving the community and profession are outstanding.

❖ **Tess Scheidel, Master of Public Health**

Tess is a student that displays active leadership and service Her dedication to service within the GVSU MPH Program is evident through her consistent volunteer work. Our program is confident that the nomination for service to Grand Valley State University is worthy of a Graduate Dean's Citation for Academic Excellence. For the past two years, she has shown a passion and commitment to making sure the student perspective is heard and shared as part of our program's student organization, Public Health Society, where she held the important student liaison role of Co-Vice President for traditional students in 2023. As a leader and student board of directors' member of PHS, Tess has showcased professionalism, worked collaboratively with peer leaders, and contributed to projects that will continue long after she has graduated.

Soon after starting coursework in our graduate program, Tess was instrumental in assisting the GVSU Public Health Program to establish and engage in a partnership with Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures for a community-wide, mobile oral health education and screening event that impacted GRPS students across Grand Rapids. Beyond her work with PHS, Tess has assisted in above-and-beyond service to the program including (but not limited to) National Public Health Week planning, alumni networking, marketing, accreditation efforts, and community partner planning.

College of Liberal Art and Science

❖ **Aleksandra Makrievski, Master of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology**

Aleksandra joined the master's program as a combined degree student and went from serving her undergraduate peers to serving her fellow graduate students as the president of the graduate student club, PAGES (Professional Association of Graduate Scientists) at GVSU. PAGES serves students in the Professional Science Masters (PSM) program and Aleksandra's service and leadership in this club was instrumental in allowing them to hold meetings for graduate student networking as well as inviting speakers to talk about jobs in the field. In particular, Aleksandra organized a very successful event hosting a local biotech company (Charles River) recruiter to talk about positions available with them in West Michigan (and around the world) and network with students. With this nomination, the department recognizes and applauds Aleksandra's success leading the PAGES, securing a permanent position with Trinity Health, and successfully completing her MS in Cell and Molecular Biology.

❖ **Jazmin Wilson, Master of Science in Communications**

A leader is more than the accomplishments on their resume, a true leader is someone you can depend on to model professionalism and push others to do their best. Jazmin exhibits the intangible qualities of a leader that you cannot always quantify but you always recognize and appreciate. She exhibits true leadership and service in DEI initiatives, civic responsibility, and with her peers. Jazmin has also helped GVSU create important local and national connections regarding DEI and civic issues. She is currently doing communication outreach for the 2024 Black Boys and Men National Symposium that will be held in June of this year in Grand Rapids. This conference is an important initiative through the Division of Enrollment, Development, and Educational Outreach. She has also worked to help increase voter engagement on campus and in the community. In the last year Jazmin has helped connect with prospective HBCU students, recruit our incoming class, and create an overall better experience for the participants. Jazmin works as a GA in the Graduate School where she helps run events like the Citation Awards and the 3-Minute Thesis Competition as well as create content for and manage the social media outlets. Jazmin constantly makes

sure our students in the COM program are aware of what is happening on campus so we can be present and active in the larger campus community. I would like to address Jazmin as a leader in the classroom. It may seem like a cliché, but a true leader really does lead by example. Jazmin models professional behavior and is a natural leader in the classroom. As a professor I rely on Jazmin to motivate other students and encourage the class to think critically about course content.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Henry Pena, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Henry has exemplified the provision of leadership and service to the University during his time as a graduate student. Henry has served as a past KCON GSO President and is currently serving as the President of the University Graduate Student Association (GSA). Under his leadership there has been consistent student representation at University Graduate Council meetings and increased communication of activities and events. Henry was also a founding member of the Multicultural Student Nurses Organization at Grand Valley State University; he continues to serve that organization as the membership officer. Henry has demonstrated leadership by completing his project effectively at his clinical site. His clinical site is a safety net clinic that serves underrepresented and under-insured patients. Henry has used his bilingual and bi-cultural skills very effectively in providing care and in leading staff through a complex quality improvement project. He relates effectively with providers, staff and patients at his clinical site. He is frequently taking on extra projects, leadings within the School of Nursing. His various activities have strongly supported the Hispanic Community in SE Grand Rapids along with supporting his colleagues at KCON.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GVSU

Winter 2024

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **El Beringer, Social Work**

El has consistently gone above and beyond to foster an environment where every individual feels valued and respected. Through their active involvement in various student organizations, initiatives, and advocacy efforts, they have made significant strides in creating a more inclusive campus for all. Whether through their role as a Co-Advocate assisting students who have experienced sexual and relationship violence on campus through non-judgmental and confidential support, or, as a graduate assistant for the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center. El has played a pivotal role in bringing together students from diverse backgrounds, fostering meaningful dialogue, and creating opportunities for underrepresented voices to be heard through their work as a graduate assistant for the LGBT Resource Center on Campus. Additionally, El is currently the macro social work intern at GVSU's Counseling Center, where they assist with implementing programs that elevate the voices and stories of students who are often marginalized at GVSU. Their efforts have not only enriched the campus experience for current students but have also laid a strong foundation for future generations.

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

❖ **Selena Cade, Master of Applied Computer Science**

Selena's impact on the Grand Valley community can be seen beyond the classroom. Her master's project is highly relevant in today's world and involves creating a website and set of interactive reports by analyzing years of pre- and post-survey reports from high school students who participated in their outreach programs. The website itself is highly informative and has been explicitly designed to be accessible in terms of supporting assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers). She actively encouraged others to find their place in Grand Valley and served in influential roles to offer insights into enhancing campus culture. She offered valuable feedback to faculty and staff as a representative in university committees. She has participated in

Black Excellence 365 and was a peer mentor for their summer program for three years. She was also on a panel for an event called "The Invisibility of Black Women" with the Center for Women and Gender Equity, has worked in the Office of Multicultural Affairs for two years, and has been a graduate assistant for the Charter Schools Office recently as well.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Erik Hernandez-Morales, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Mr. Eric Hernandez-Morales has promoted Inclusion and Diversity in many ways including assisting in graduate inclusion research and designing cultural inclusion pamphlets. He is a regular volunteer and advocate for the GVSU physical therapy pro bono clinic where his language skills have been an invaluable asset in communicating with Spanish-speaking patients. He is a tremendous asset to the clinic, not just for his direct patient care activities, but also in sharing his experiences with physical therapy students in the Physical Therapy cohorts and encouraging their participation.

Mr. Hernandez-Morales instructed a teach-in and presented on the concept of pain perception and how healthcare providers alter their pain treatments regarding someone's culture and gender as well as how different cultures and genders are stigmatized about their pain perception. Mr. Hernandez-Morales promotes inclusive thinking in both the classroom and in his clinical experiences and is deserving of this recognition.

❖ **Amelia Horn, Master of Public Health**

Amelia's most commendable work in this area of excellence took place across Fall 2023 to early Winter 2024. Amelia was vital in creating a space with Kaufman Interfaith Institute to discuss how spirituality and sexuality intersect. She approached it with care to the religions on the panel, as well as the students who might be in attendance. She was the coordinator of a large variety of stakeholder voices from across campus and the community (students, Student Health Services, Libraries, Trinity Health, Health Departments clinical services, Out on the Lakeshore, Kaufman Interfaith Institute) trying to get the most diverse set of perspectives and programming for the. Her dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the GVSU community is evident through her consistent volunteer and practicum work with Recreation & Wellness. Amelia also helped to rewrite Recreation &

Wellnesses' 8 dimensions of wellness and add the new concepts of equity and justice to the wellness wheel at GVSU. She has displayed active leadership at GVSU, beyond the general requirements of graduate school, and her work has the potential to impact GVSU students long after receiving her MPH.

❖ **Kierra Washington, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Kierra has used her role as a class leader and her impressive character to make the Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy at GVSU a more inclusive space for future generations of students. Ms. Washington has carried herself with dignity and poise throughout her academic career at GVSU. As a racial minority, she has faced obstacles that most of her classmates have not. Despite this, she has chosen to leave a legacy of making our program better for minority students who come after her. Second-year students are typically assigned a first-year student to mentor as they enter our program. Ms. Washington also formed her own affinity group with incoming Black students in the cohort behind her to offer support and mentorship. Additionally, Ms. Washington applied for, and received, a scholarship through the National Association of Black Physical Therapists (NABPT), which led to her writing an essay published through the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) Pelvic Health Academy entitled "You Look Like Me! – The Need to Increase Diversity in the Field of Physical Therapy".

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Monase Chibambo, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Monase has served on the Kirkhof College of Nursing Graduate Student Organization board as the Diversity Equity Inclusion Advocate for multiple years. Under her leadership there has been increased awareness about DEI-related issues and work to improve the sense of belonging of all students at KCON. Monase has been instrumental in facilitating the KCON GSO's first-annual Spring Student Sharing Symposium, which will focus on DEI topics. Monase's work at an HIV clinic has made her especially thoughtful about the LGBTQ community. She has been an enthusiastic supporter of the inclusion and diversity programming at GVSU and KCON since she began her education with us. Recently, she represented GVSU and KCON at an ANCC Diversity Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. She works to encourage and support all her colleagues.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL CITATION FOR
EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY
Winter 2024**

Each Excellence in Sustainability award nominee has demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovative thinking in the community by implementing sustainable best practices. The award recipients must have given life to a sustainability initiative in one or more aspects of the triple bottom line in sustainability (economic, social, or environmental).

College of Education & Community Innovation

❖ **Angie Leedy, Master of Social Work**

Throughout her tenure as a graduate assistant in the School of Social Work and as a member of various committees such as the CECI Advisory and Communication Committee (CACC), Angie has consistently exemplified extraordinary dedication and vision that have allowed for more sustainable practices. Angie's impact on sustainability initiatives is truly commendable. She spearheaded the development and implementation of sustainable practices within our institution, leaving an indelible mark on the College of Education and Community Innovation. Her meticulous work restructuring the nomination and awards model for CECI faculty and staff showcases her ability to innovate and lead effectively. In addition, her capstone project realigning and enhancing the pre-departure expectations for the Peru Faculty-Led Study Abroad trip highlights her commitment to sustainable practices across diverse settings. Her work will allow for the necessary resources for sustainable study-abroad practices for years to come. Angie's leadership and innovative thinking have not only brought tangible improvements to GVSU but also inspired others to engage in sustainable endeavors. Her dedication to social sustainability is evident in every project she undertakes.

❖ **Catherine Zietse, Master of Public Administration**

When Catherine started in the MPA program, she worked for the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Grand Rapids. While there, she was recognized by the National Recreation and Park Association for her efforts in promoting greenspace in urban neighborhoods and expanding linkages to

regional trail systems. Over the last year and a half, she transitioned to a new role as the Grand River Greenway Program Manager at Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. She is a leader in the effort to equitably promote the ecological, social, economic benefits of this vital waterway.

College of Health Professions

❖ **Marialuisa Ochoa, Master of Public Health**

Marialuisa has proven to be an advocate for health, impact, and long-term change in our community as demonstrated through her work on her MPH Project, “Food Access Barriers Among Grand Valley State University Students”. Her passion and commitment to understanding the collegiate community’s needs for reliable food resources and campus food insecurity are evident in her research. For the past two years, Marialuisa has shown a passion and commitment to helping an often-stigmatized topic of food insecurity within our campus community. In fall 2023, Maria decided to complete a graduate project that has the potential to influence and expand awareness of GVSU’s food pantry, Replenish, and its resources. This service is influential to college success, growth and development, socialization, and overall mental health and well-being. She hopes her project, collected data, analysis, and outcomes to impact awareness and potential policy change for our campus.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Mary Kooyer, Doctor of Nursing Practice**

Mary has done an outstanding job in her DNP project work including pivoting her project plan and deliverables to meet the sustainable practice needs of the organization. Mary developed strong relationships and trust within the team by thinking on her feet and demonstrating strong leadership characteristics that enabled her to re-build an innovative sustainable workflow and scheduling plan for the clinic. After completing an integrative review of the literature, she designed the program based on evidence-based sustainability practices to ensure essential practice change would be achieved throughout the organization. This plan addresses important sustainability markers that include patient access, cost/reimbursement, and patient/provider satisfaction (the essential elements of the Quadruple Aim).

3-MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION

2024 First Place Winner

The Graduate School hosted GVSU's annual 3-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition on February 14, 2024. Students presented their independent research in exactly three minutes with the aid of one static PowerPoint slide. A panel of faculty judges from a variety of disciplines at GVSU determined the winner.

The GVSU faculty who served on the 2024 3MT judging panel included:

- Dr. Andrew Booth, College of Health Professions
- Dr. Paul Bylsma, College of Education & Community Innovation
- Dr. Brian Hatzel, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Dr. Tonisha Jones, College of Education & Community Innovation
- Dr. Libby MacQuillan, College of Health Professions
- Dr. Cray Mulder, College of Education & Community Innovation
- Dr. Wendy Reffeor, Padnos College of Engineering & Computing
- Dr. Janet Winter, Kirkhof College of Nursing

Seidman College of Business and College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ **Jowei Yek, Master of Business Administration & Master of Art in Social Innovation**
 - **Presentation Title:** Employing Intern-national Students: Perceived Costs and Benefits to Employers for Hiring International Student Interns.

Dr. Daniela Marini, Jowei's advisor, stated, He successfully obtained IRB permits to conduct research with human subjects, and he is in the process of interviewing his research participants. Participating of the Competence will help Jowei continue developing his verbal communication skills and commitment to social justice. Jowei's strong work ethics, as well as their research, interpersonal, written and verbal communication and analytical skills, make him an excellent candidate to benefit from the networking and professional development opportunities offered by the 3-Minute Thesis Competition.

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
KIMBOKO INCLUSION AWARD
Winter 2024**

The Kimboko Inclusion Award recognizes faculty who have made significant contributions in outstanding teaching, distinctive scholarship or creative work, or noteworthy service in moving GVSU graduate education toward being a more diverse and inclusive community. The award recognizes the accomplishments of Dr. Priscilla Kimboko, GVSU's first Graduate Dean, and represents her commitment to these values.

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Dr. Elizabeth Davis, Kirkhof College of Nursing**

Nominated by: Henry Peña, Doctor of Nursing Practice

Henry writes: "Leader, mentor, and educator extraordinaire, Dr. Davis embodies all three domains of the Kimboko Inclusion Award: Teaching, Creative works, and Service/outreach. In her brief tenure at GVSU, I have witnessed Dr. Davis work tirelessly to improve undergraduate course curriculum, broaden the depth of graduate education, and promote the advancement of underrepresented groups. Dr. Davis has been intentional in creating a space for diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as improving course content in the domains of LGBTQIA. Dr. Davis recognizes the potential of an individual and, more importantly, how to create a space to challenge and nurture that potential. Under her leadership and tutelage, I have come to recognize my own strengths, understand how to better serve others, and lead effectively in less than favorable circumstances. Dr. Davis understands the importance of self-care and family. It is my humble opinion that without Dr. Davis as my mentor, my graduate career would have been less impactful. I am grateful for Dr. Davis's dedication to underrepresented students and her impact on my graduate education. Thank you, Dr. Davis, for your service, leadership, and genuine concern for the academic and professional growth of the graduate students at Kirkhof College of Nursing (KCON)."

❖ **Dr. Donna Rinker, Kirkhof College of Nursing**

Nominated by: Ilanit Marx, Doctor of Nursing Practice

Ilanit writes: "I would like to nominate Dr. Rinker for her foundational role in my learning experience. Dr. Rinker's dedication was evident in laying the clinical foundation and creating numerous educational materials, including videos and presentations. What truly stands out is her commitment to embodying high moral and cultural values, as well as her consistent advocacy for equity. Dr. Rinker's unwavering awareness of the importance of equity and her proactive efforts to promote fairness and justice within the educational environment have been inspirational and deeply impactful."

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OUTSTANDING MENTORSHIP AWARD
Winter 2024**

The Faculty Mentor Award serves to acknowledge faculty who exemplify a deep commitment to fostering the professional and personal development of graduate students. This includes encouraging the development of individual talent through advising graduate-level research, promoting professional development opportunities beyond the classroom, and providing a successful transition from graduate studies to individual careers.

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ **Dr. Carrie Buist, School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, & Legal Studies**
Nominated by: Narelle Hickmon, Criminal Justice

Narelle writes: "Throughout my master's degree, I have had the privilege of being guided and mentored by Dr. Buist. She has played an instrumental role in shaping my academic and professional growth. Her mentorship extended beyond academic pursuits; I not only gained valuable skills and knowledge but also developed the confidence to navigate the challenges of graduate school and beyond. Her unwavering support and encouragement not only empowered me to push the boundaries of my capabilities and pursue opportunities I might have otherwise overlooked, but also fueled my passion for learning and research. As I move forward in my career, I carry with me not only the knowledge and skills acquired during my master's program but also the invaluable lessons in mentorship and leadership imparted by Dr. Buist. Dr. Buist's dedication to my success and her genuine investment in my growth as a scholar and a professional have left an indelible mark on my academic journey, for which I am truly grateful."

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ **Dr. Yunju Lee, School of Engineering**
Nominated by: Anton Petrenko, Engineering

Anton writes: "Dr. Yunju Lee's mentorship is truly beyond words. I had the privilege of being introduced to her by Dr. Rhodes when I was deliberating

on my thesis, particularly focusing on integrating EMG analysis. Despite initial hesitation stemming from past experiences with EMG data capture, Dr. Lee graciously agreed to guide me. Right from the start, she challenged my comprehension of every facet of my research, urging me to delve deeper into concepts. Dr. Lee emphasized the importance of comprehensive and continuous literature reviews to ensure nothing was overlooked. Moreover, she established feasible and practical timelines. For instance, a pivotal aspect of my research involved developing code for analyzing our collected data. Rather than rushing its development, she entrusted me with the task and simply requested weekly updates to monitor progress and offer assistance when needed. Furthermore, because of the accomplishment of these tasks, Dr. Lee is recommending my work to be presented at two different conferences. Finally, and most crucially, Dr. Lee's exceptional mentorship stems from her recognition of life's complexities. She viewed me not only as a student but also as a colleague, always ready to accommodate life events, whether planned or unforeseen, and devise solutions that benefitted us both. For these remarkable qualities and more, I wholeheartedly nominate Dr. Yunju Lee for the Outstanding Mentorship Award."

❖ **Dr. Wendy Reffeor, School of Engineering**

Nominated by: Genevieve Wisby, Engineering

Genevieve writes: "I am writing to enthusiastically recommend Dr. Wendy Reffeor for the Outstanding Mentorship Award. In my last year of working closely with her, I have been consistently impressed by her guidance, and unwavering support for all of her mentees. Dr. Reffeor possesses an exceptional ability to foster growth and development in those under her mentorship. She consistently upholds her moral compass and exemplifies to her mentees that prioritizing integrity and ethical conduct, even when it demands more time and effort, yields substantial long-term benefits. Dr. Reffeor goes above and beyond to create an inclusive environment to not only share her passion for engineering but encourage her mentee's to explore their potential in a highly technical field. Her mentorship extends beyond just academic or professional guidance; she also serves as a role model, instilling important values such as integrity, resilience, and empathy. Dr. Reffeor's passion for engineering is truly inspiring to all those around her. Whether it's providing constructive feedback, offering valuable insights, or simply lending a listening ear, Dr. Reffeor consistently demonstrates a genuine commitment to the success and well-being of her mentee's. An instance that illustrates Dr.

Reffeor's exceptional commitment to mentorship occurred during a critical phase of my thesis data collection. Despite having an impending presentation on a substantial project of her own the following morning, she remained in the lab with me until past 8:30 p.m., demonstrating her unwavering dedication to assisting me in achieving the ambitious goals I had set for my thesis. Dr. Reffeor truly embodies the spirit of outstanding mentorship, and I believe she is highly deserving of the Outstanding Mentorship Award. Her dedication, impact, and passion for what she does will undoubtedly leave a lasting imprint on all those fortunate enough to have been mentored by her. Thank you for considering my recommendation. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information."

❖ **Dr. Suhila Sawesi, School of Computing**

Nominated by: Arya Jadhav, Data Science and Analytics,
Hemalatha Sabbineni, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics and
Subrahmanya Charitha Kodumagulla, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics

Arya writes: "Dr. Sawesi creates an exceptionally welcoming atmosphere, striving to foster an inclusive classroom environment. She coordinates a journal club, greatly benefiting students like me, who may not have a traditional background in biology but possess a keen interest in research. Her guidance on conducting research is invaluable, especially for those of us venturing into this field for the first time. This nurturing setting serves as an ideal incubator for aspiring researchers. Through her mentorship, I have not only developed a profound appreciation for bioinformatics but have also discovered my passion for the field. Dr. Sawesi's support and encouragement have been instrumental in my journey, marking her as an outstanding mentor in the world of bioinformatics."

Hemalatha writes: "As a Health and Bioinformatics student set to graduate in April 2024, Dr. Sawesi's unwavering dedication and support have profoundly impacted me. Dr. Sawesi's commitment to fostering student success is unparalleled. Her leadership in journal club meetings refined our literature review skills. Under her guidance, I gained confidence in navigating academic literature and using Zotero for citation management, enhancing my research capabilities. Dr. Sawesi's guidance on our research project 'Analyzing Triple-Negative Breast Cancer through Data Aggregation, Meta-Analysis, and Machine Learning Techniques' refined my data analysis and

research dissemination skills. Furthermore, Dr. Sawesi has played a pivotal role in bridging practical experience with academic learning by facilitating an internship opportunity for me at the University of Charleston, WV. This collaboration has allowed me to apply my bioinformatics skills in a real-world healthcare setting, further preparing me for my career. Dr. Sawesi provides exceptional support to students by being accessible beyond regular hours, including weekends, offering crucial guidance for project success and research endeavors. Her mentorship fosters a nurturing environment for professional growth, characterized by a passion for teaching, dedication to student success, and a supportive atmosphere deserving recognition as an outstanding mentor. Therefore, I wholeheartedly nominate Dr. Suhila Sawesi for the 'Outstanding Mentorship Award.' Her contributions to our university and to the personal and professional growth of her students are immeasurable."

College of Health Professions

- ❖ **Dr. Sarah Nechuta, School of Interdisciplinary Health**
Nominated by: Olivia Martin, Public Health

Olivia writes: "I had a hard time choosing between nominating her for this award or the Outstanding Teacher Award because she truly exemplifies both. I have never met a more sincere and dedicated professor than Dr. Nechuta. I have been blessed to have her as my academic advisor, final project mentor, supervisor, and professor. She never ceases to impress me with her knowledge, her care and interest in promoting individual student achievements and learning, and desire to listen and receive feedback to better the student's experience in all settings. Dr. Nechuta has consistently sought my well-being throughout my entire program. She has checked in on me every semester, sometimes multiple times to ensure my classes are going well, talk about internship and job-related questions, and provide feedback on resumes, serve as a job reference, and more. She has supported my advancement outside of the classroom including conducting a research project that I presented via a poster at a national conference last November, being her research and graduate assistant, and sharing her wealth of connections for networking and job guidance as my program is ending. Dr. Nechuta truly cares about and guides her students in a way that is rare to see. She truly wants each student to succeed and reach their own personal goals

in and outside of the classroom. GVSU and I are truly blessed to have her as a professor and mentor.”

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

❖ **Dr. Charlyn Partridge, Department of Biology and Annis Water Resources Institute**

Nominated by: Keely Dunham, Biology - AWRI

Keely writes: “Dr. Partridge deserves recognition for her passion for research and student mentorship. As a graduate student, she has been my greatest supporter. We are working on using DNA collected from the air to identify species in a forest...sounds difficult right? I had never imagined myself getting a master’s degree, especially not in molecular ecology. I didn’t even take genetics in undergrad, but Charlyn’s teachings and mentorship have given me confidence in my work. She has made this difficult topic accessible to me which has given me a sense of belonging in the scientific community. In my first semester, Charlyn told me that we were a team. These words have stuck with me and she has proven many times that she meant it. One example of Charlyn’s support is that I had a very short talk to give in Kalamazoo at a conference. She drove 3 hours roundtrip to watch me speak for 6 minutes. She had a flight to New York early the next day and still prioritized supporting me. She has spent many late nights with me in the lab troubleshooting when problems arise. She has helped me grow my professional network and can tell you what each of her previous grad students are up to now. The Partridge Lab’s culture is respectful and inclusive because of Charlyn’s leadership style. I am so proud to be her graduate student. The world needs more leaders, teachers, and scientists like her.”

❖ **Dr. Carl Ruetz III, Department of Biology and Annis Water Resources Institute**

Nominated by: Tyler Hoyt, Biology – AWRI

Tyler wrote: Dr. Ruetz embodies exceptional mentorship, exceeding all expectations with unwavering dedication. His collegiate profile shines with the achievements of former students which is a testament to his transformative ability in elevating graduate scholars to unprecedented levels of success. In the past year alone, Dr. Ruetz has guided three individuals to

graduation and advanced employment, launching them into illustrious career paths. As the next student on the cusp of graduation and employment under his guidance, I am a living testament to his remarkable mentorship. Dr. Ruetz's influence reaches every facet of academic discourse. His prominent presence at conferences is not merely a coincidence but a reflection of his esteemed reputation. Dr. Ruetz's name resonates amongst peers as a paragon of excellence. Yet his altruistic spirit extends beyond personal accolades. He generously facilitates connections between professionals and students which is a catalyst for professional advancement. Amidst his myriad accomplishments, Dr. Ruetz's dedication to students remains unparalleled. Beyond mentoring me through many research projects and towards the publication of multiple peer reviewed manuscripts, he has empowered me to become a mentor myself. Dr. Ruetz's mentorship fosters a mutualistic partnership that propels individuals towards excellence. His dedication, guidance, and unwavering commitment to undergraduate and graduate students alike inspires all who know him. Dr. Ruetz's influence will remain impactful for students well after their time at GVSU.

**GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD
Winter 2024**

The Outstanding Teaching Award distinguishes faculty who deserve special recognition for exemplary teaching. This includes contributing to graduate student development by using thoughtful and creative methods of instruction, assisting in deeply understanding course content, and engaging students in a dynamic and inclusive manner.

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ **Dr. Paul Bylsma, Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling**
Nominated by: Obed Amoakoh Boateng, Higher Education and Tonia Castillo, Higher Education

Obed writes: “Dr. Bylsma is an exceptional candidate for this distinguished award because of his exceptional skill as an educator, his intellectual brilliance, and his deep commitment to the educational development of his students. Dr. Bylsma exemplifies the qualities of an exemplary teacher through his innovative teaching methods, sincere dedication to engaging students, and authenticity. During my four semesters with Dr. Bylsma, he has combined substantive content with thoughtful pedagogical techniques by taking complex theoretical concepts and breaking them down into understandable components through clear explanations, apt analogies, and illuminating examples popularly known in class as ‘funtivities’. As the saying goes, ‘Calling someone a teacher is therefore ultimately not a matter of referring to a job title or a profession, but is a kind of compliment we pay when we acknowledge—and when we are able to acknowledge—that someone has indeed taught us something, that someone has indeed revealed something to us and that therefore we have been taught’ (Biesta, 2014, p. 54). I firmly believe that it is this essence that distinguishes Dr. Paul Bylsma as an outstanding teacher.”

- ❖ **Dr. Laila McCloud, Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling**
Nominated by: Lucy Karpukhno, Higher Education

Lucy writes: “As I began my graduate studies in the College Student Affairs Leadership program, I had hoped to learn how to become a good student affairs practitioner, but I did not expect to learn how to become a better person. Through her instructional methods, Dr. McCloud provided me with the space and encouragement to engage in deep reflection, challenging me to question and explore my own identity within the context of higher education institutions. I am so deeply appreciative of Dr. McCloud’s unwavering ability to direct difficult conversations and feelings toward productive change and personal growth. Dr. McCloud empowered me with the knowledge to develop my own beliefs while still fostering an environment of respect and inclusivity. I have emerged as a more resilient, patient, and compassionate individual as a direct result of her classes. Her influence extends beyond teaching us how to navigate the complexities of higher education; she has taught us how to become confident, inclusive people capable of making real change. One of my favorite Dr. McCloud quotes is, “we create worlds with the language we choose to use,” and her language has profoundly changed my perspective on the world. As I reflect on my graduate experiences at GVSU, I feel immensely proud of the person I have become, largely due to the challenges and support I received from Dr. McCloud.”

Padnos College of Engineering and Computing

- ❖ **Dr. Zachary DeBruine, School of Computing**
Nominated by: Arya Jadhav, Data Science and Analytics

Arya writes: “Dr. Zachary DeBruine is an exceptional educator who transcends traditional teaching methods to clarify the complex concepts and mathematics that underpin the latest advancements in technology, particularly in the fascinating field of Machine Learning (ML). His approach ensures that I am more than equipped to navigate the rapidly evolving technological landscape, instilling a spirit of experimentation and innovation. This empowers me to leverage my knowledge creatively, developing solutions for complex problems—a skill invaluable in ML. Dr. DeBruine’s incorporation of Kaggle competitions into the curriculum fosters an environment of continuous learning and innovation. His enthusiasm for ML is infectious, transforming learning into an exhilarating experience. He

champions a learning philosophy that is empowering, making sure I feel prepared to enter the field with confidence. His dedication to creating a supportive learning environment encourages me to embrace my curiosity and pursue knowledge without hesitation, making me feel equipped to exceed industry expectations. Under Dr. DeBruine's guidance, I feel excited to contribute to the future of Machine Learning.”

College of Health Professions

❖ **Jonathan Rose, Department of Physical Therapy & Athletic Training**

Nominated by: Kevin Slowik, Doctor of Physical Therapy

Kevin writes: “Throughout my academic journey, Professor Rose has been a beacon of excellence, embodying the criteria set forth for this prestigious recognition. Professor Rose consistently demonstrates a profound commitment to graduate student development. His teaching methods are not only thoughtful but also exceptionally creative, making complex concepts accessible and engaging. He fosters an environment of academic rigor that challenges us to delve deeper into course content, ensuring a thorough understanding of both theory and practice. One of the remarkable qualities of Professor Rose is his dynamic and inclusive approach to teaching. He creates an atmosphere where every student feels valued and respected, promoting active participation and meaningful dialogue. His dedication to fostering an inclusive learning environment enriches the educational experience for all. Personally, Professor Rose has had a profound influence on my DPT academic journey. His kindness, clarity of instruction, and prompt responsiveness to student needs have been instrumental in my success. He goes above and beyond to support his students, providing guidance and encouragement every step of the way. In summary, Professor Rose exemplifies the essence of the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award. His dedication to student development, innovative teaching methods, and inclusive approach make him truly deserving of this honor. I am grateful for the impact he has had on my academic experience and wholeheartedly endorse their nomination for this award.”

Kirkhof College of Nursing

❖ **Dr. Nicole Harpold, Kirkhof College of Nursing**

Nominated by: Ilanit Marx, Doctor of Nursing Practice

Ilanit writes: “Dr. Harpold's meticulous and organized approach to course materials on Blackboard, including weekly videos, has greatly enhanced learning experience. Her dedication to promoting evidence-based practice through real-life examples has been invaluable in helping grasp complex concepts. Additionally, Dr. Harpold's commitment to student support is evident through her weekly scheduled office hours and open-door policy, which have provided opportunities for guidance and clarification. Her exceptional teaching methods and unwavering support deserve recognition through this award.”

**GRADUATE STUDENT
PRESIDENTIAL RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS**

Spring/Summer 2023

Lauren Czajka, Emily DeMers, Elise Kuiper, Andrea Valdes Flores, Jenna Prohaska.
College of Health Professions, Occupational Science & Therapy.

Title: *The Effectiveness of Technology and Smart-Home Based Teaching Modules for Direct Care Workers*

Drow, Jamie. College of Health Professions, Occupational Science & Therapy.

Title: *Bridging the Gap for Acute Care Occupational Therapists Treating Bariatric Patients: Utilizing Knowledge Translation to Provide a Hands-on Learning Experience*

Hoyt, Tyler. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Contribution of resident and migrant yellow perch to angler harvest in drowned river mouth lakes*

Kolanowski, Mason. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biomedical Sciences.

Title: *Effects of Cannabidiol on Compartment Specific Dopamine Release in the Striatum*

Kosak, Grayson. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Tributary Confluence Effects on the Distribution, Density, and Diversity of Freshwater Mussel (Unionidae) Assemblages in the Lower Grand River*

Kuzma, Faith. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Headstarted eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) growth, survival, and spatial ecology in southwest Michigan*

Loinyio, Allan. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Phylogenomics, Systematics, and the Evolution of Reproductive Traits in the African Plant Genus *Aneilema* in Response to Diverse Habitats*

Lucas, Katherine. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Impact of climate change and restoration on phosphorus loading in impaired wetlands*

Fall 2023

Paige Flickinger, Allyssa Toth, Madielyn Knaggs, Jonathan Newby, Renee Olsen. College of Health Professions, Department of Occupational Science and Therapy.

Title: *Cerebral Palsy and Social Participation: A Case Report*

Melton, Callie. College of Education and Community Innovation, Public Administration.

Title: *An Examination of the Clean Water Act's Navigable Waters Rule and Recommendations from the Field*

Raona, Anthony. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology.

Title: *Understanding the Relationship between Strongyloides robustus, Flying Squirrels (Glaucomys spp.), and other Sciurid Species*

Winter 2024

Dietz, Katelyn. School of Interdisciplinary Health.

Title: *Examining health implications of social media on adolescents*

Dunham, Keely. Department of Biology.

Title: *Using airborne eDNA to investigate hemlock woolly adelgid impacts on Michigan mixedwood communities*

Ellis, Katelyn. Department of Public Health.

Title: *Assessment of patient education and awareness on the benefits of spacer therapy when used with metered dose inhalers (MDIS)*

Forelines, Grace. School of Interdisciplinary Health.

Title: *Exercise for everybody: Inclusive fitness programming for college students with disabilities*

Jalali, Jamshid. Department of Biology.

Title: *Assessing contributions of agricultural land use and climate change to water scarcity in the Serbian Danube River Basin*

Mattson, Melissa. Department of Biomedical Sciences.

Title: *Steroid receptor expression in estrogen treated aged rat epididymis*

Ochoa, Marialuisa. School of Interdisciplinary Health.

Title: *Food access barriers among Grand Valley State University students*

Swayne, Meghan. School of Interdisciplinary Health.

Title: *Assessment of the perceptions of food allergies accommodations on college campuses in West Michigan: A student's perspective*

**OTHER GRADUATE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN WINTER 2024**

**GLENN A. NIEMEYER AWARD
FOR OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENTS**

*This is a university-wide award honoring the most outstanding graduate students;
selection is made by the Provost's Cabinet.*

Outstanding Graduate Students

- ❖ Henry Peña, Doctor of Nursing Practice
- ❖ Evan Potter, Health Administration

Excellence-in-a-Discipline Awards 2023-2024

College Liberal Arts & Sciences

- ❖ Esi Aniwa, Communications
- ❖ Jeannie Kane, Cell and Molecular Biology
- ❖ Anna Mayotte, School Psychology, Psy.S.
- ❖ Sophie Mikonczyk, Biostatistics
- ❖ Mary Parr, Biology
- ❖ Olivia Sweeney, Biomedical Sciences
- ❖ Clara Voetberg, Applied Statistics

Seidman College of Business

- ❖ Emily Booms-Lewis, Accounting
- ❖ Samira Surani, Taxation
- ❖ Jowei Yek, Business Administration

College of Education & Community Innovation

- ❖ Kassidi Adams, Literacy Studies
- ❖ Azzam Alfarraj, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership
- ❖ Obed Boateng, Higher Education
- ❖ Jack Boitel, Social Innovation

- ❖ Benjamin Fetterley, Health Administration
- ❖ Narelle Hickmon, Criminal Justice
- ❖ Colton Hyble, Public Administration
- ❖ Misty Johnson, School Counseling
- ❖ Ashly Latham, Instruction and Curriculum
- ❖ Michaeleen Rood, Social Work
- ❖ Natalie Zadorozny, Educational Leadership

Padnos College of Engineering & Computing

- ❖ Trevor Kishbaugh, Data Science and Analytics
- ❖ Aaron Mulder, Engineering
- ❖ Collins Onyango, Cybersecurity
- ❖ Marwah Talbeh, Health Informatics and Bioinformatics
- ❖ Astha Thapa, Applied Computer Science

College of Health Professions

- ❖ Charles Bickford, Audiology, Doctorate
- ❖ Sami Dowling, Recreational Therapy
- ❖ Josilyn Grotenhuis, Physical Therapy, Doctorate
- ❖ Melanie Koto, Occupational Therapy
- ❖ Olivia Martin, Public Health
- ❖ Joseph Pape, Medical Dosimetry
- ❖ Ryan Sheeran, Athletic Training
- ❖ Kyle Smietanski, Clinical Dietetics
- ❖ Justin Smith, Physician Assistant Studies
- ❖ Devynn Vega, Speech-Language Pathology

Kirkhof College of Nursing

- ❖ Ilanit Marx, Nursing, Doctorate
- ❖ Megan Urbanick, Nursing

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President: Henry Peña, Doctor of Nursing

Vice President: Vaishnavi Rasane, Applied Computer Science

Administrative Officer: Narelle Hickmon, Criminal Justice

Finance Officer: Brooks Twist, Accounting

Communications Officer: Jhon Kerby Gerli, Business Administration

Advisors:

Melissa Baker-Boosamra, Office of Student Life

Dr. Matthew Christians, Cell and Molecular Biology

Dr. Sarah Nechuta, Public Health

Dr. Tonisha Jones, Criminal Justice

GRADUATE COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chair:

Dr. Amy Campbell, Psychology

Vice-Chair:

Dr. Monica Harris, Education

Policy Subcommittee Chair:

Dr. Amy Campbell, Psychology

Curriculum and Program Review Subcommittee Chair:

Dr. Mark Staves, Cell and Molecular Biology



Dr. Jeffrey A. Potteiger, Associate Vice-Provost for the Graduate School

Trista Bergerud, Assistant Director of Programming and Communications

Sheri DeVries, Administrative Assistant

Graduate Assistants:

Long Ho, Public Administration

Jazmin Wilson, Communications

Skye Gerald, Applied Computer Science

Aruna Karkee, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership

Student Assistants:

Ashley Derfiny, Management and Marketing (undergraduate)

Katelyn Keech, Diagnostic Medical Sonography (undergraduate)

The Graduate School

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