

GRCC

M A G A Z I N E

News from Grand Rapids Community College

Fall 2008



GRCC's (not so) Secret Garden

Off-Campus
Sites Bring
GRCC Closer
to Home

Nursing Program
Goes Year-Around

Academic Program
Boosts Athletes'
Passing Game



A Note From the President

Hello, I'm glad to see you've opened your new GRCC magazine.

Being here at GRCC as Interim President is something of a homecoming for me after holding several positions here from the mid '60s to the mid '80s. And while it has been awhile since I last hung my hat at GRCC, one thing is still the same: Everything is changing! That's why we can still say 'GRCC is right for the times'—this year as we have every year for the last 94 years.

We've given you a taste of what's going on here in our newly revised GRCC Magazine so that whether you're a student, alum, or one of the taxpayers who help support us, you'll know just what your community's college is doing.

- You've told us that you want more convenience when it comes to attending classes, and the price of fuel has only underscored that need. That's why we're creating new sites around the county and beyond. See where in our story on page 4.
- Many of us are taking comfort in the theory that 50 is the new 30. Nonetheless, a majority of us are not the booming babies we once were. But we still know what we want and we want better healthcare, independent living options, and enough nurses to see that we get our needs met as we age. We have a tremendous nursing program at GRCC and, to meet the increasing demand, we've gone from a traditional two semesters per year to a year-around program.
- We're even improving the air we breathe. We've installed a 25,000 sq. ft. green roof that reduces the "urban heat island" of our city, captures rain run-off that could overtax our sewers and pollute our waterways, saves the college money, and looks beautiful. We're pleased to have the first teaching green roof around, so come down to look and learn. Furthermore, we're becoming a tobacco-free campus on November 20, 2008.

This magazine is packed with invitations for you to come hear speakers and attend events. There are pictures of our lively learning environment and even more stories. I'll stop now to let you turn the page and start reading all about us!

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne E. Mulder". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anne E. Mulder, Ph.D.
Interim President, Grand Rapids Community College

GRCC

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Community College

More Is Better (and Easier to Get to)

New learning sites underscore GRCC's commitment to expanding educational opportunities for the West Michigan community

by Vicki Hudson

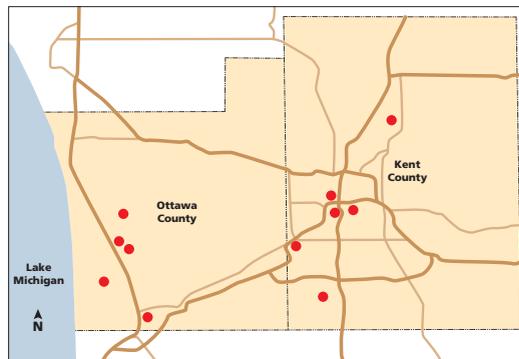


"We needed to look at how to remove barriers of time, space, capacity and travel."

—Gilda Gely

While the roots of GRCC are firmly planted in the rich history of downtown Grand Rapids, the need to branch out has been steadily increasing over the last decade. And lately that demand has really expanded.

The ever-growing need for higher education—to prepare for new millennium careers or to upgrade skills for existing jobs—has intersected with climbing fuel prices, overtaxed campus classroom and parking capacity at peak times, and increasingly busy personal schedules that don't leave time for travel. But GRCC has solutions.



Removing Barriers

"We've been around long enough that we have faced all kinds of societal changes and employment demands," said GRCC Provost Dr. Gilda Gely. "Things around us change, but our mission to provide learning opportunities for all doesn't. So we needed to look at how to remove barriers of time, space capacity and travel and we have several exciting new ways of doing this."

Several communities across Kent County, and now in Ottawa County, too, are seeking GRCC's active participation within their boundaries. They want to increase the number of their high school students attending college and GRCC's flexibility and commitment to student success matches their goals.



Byron Center has always hosted a few community college classes for the convenience of southwest Kent County residents, but

those smaller efforts have quickly grown and GRCC is now using it as a testing ground for one of the college's visions: Regional Centers that offer support services at each site.

With the enthusiasm of then Byron Center Public Schools Superintendent Howard Napp behind them, and the willingness of that school district to transform one of their former classroom buildings to accommodate GRCC, a pilot program was introduced that is now serving 350 students.

Full-Service Opportunities

"If things continue to go so well," says Arturo Armijo who coordinates most of the off-campus classes of GRCC, "we'll make sure students will be able to get all their basic college classes, as well as counseling, tutoring and all other services, right there."



Rockford and Grandville high schools

are also being considered for regional centers. Currently, GRCC has 180 and 160 students, respectively, taking classes there.



Ottawa County has also sought out GRCC to provide higher education there. With Holland Mayor Al McGeehan at the table, it was recently

announced that over \$250,000 was raised to make it possible for GRCC to bring job training, GED and ESL classes to their Midtown Campus, a neighborhood revitalization project run by Jubilee Ministries in Holland's center city.

GRCC also offers classes at West Ottawa High School, at their Ottawa County Thompson M-TEC, and at the Ottawa County Intermediate School District's Careerline Tech Center adjacent to the GRCC M-TEC. The Lakeshore Campus topped 1,000 students this fall.



Partnering With GVSU



A unique partnership with Grand Valley State University is also new this year. GVSU and GRCC are targeting residents along the lakeshore.

The university identified upwards of 20,000 people in that area who had some college credits but never finished a degree. Knowing that GRCC offered courses needed for the first two years of a degree program, a partnership was formalized.

“Together we have created a partnership with GRCC offering general education classes as needed, and GVSU providing the path to finish with a B.A.,” said Dan Clark, dean of GRCC’s Lakeshore Campus—composed of the five sites GRCC has inside Ottawa County. “We are very committed to this new initiative to increase the number of college graduates in Ottawa County,” Clark said. “GVSU even has a Liberal Studies degree that allows people to customize their studies.”

Beautiful Days In the Neighborhood



Two neighborhoods on Grand Rapids’ southeast and northwest sides now have GRCC Learning Corners. Learning Corners have a particular purpose, according to Gely; “They are a learning opportunity for people who might not, at first, describe themselves as college material.



They may have done poorly in their last school experience, left school early for personal reasons, or feel that getting into college is too confusing to try.”

Armijo added: “By providing services in an accessible, friendly location within their neighborhood, people are more apt to drop in. Once they enroll, they experience the personal attention, motivation, and encouragement they need when returning for an education. They feel a secure sense that they can succeed.”

Gely indicated that the college’s experience on the southeast side of Grand Rapids “has shown us that those students who are successful in the Learning Corner format are usually ready to transfer to the main campus and get on with their education.

“We have to go where we are needed and provide the learning opportunities that are needed to become college- or career-ready,” she continued. That keeps the doors to education open to individuals and to a better future for our whole community. That is what we do.”

“We have to go where we are needed.”

—Gilda Gely

For more information about GRCC off-campus learning sites visit:
www.grcc.edu/regionalcenters



***YOU CAN
BE HERE**

GRCC's (not so) Secret Garden

Steelcase Foundation Brings GRCC's Newest Sustainable Space to Life; Visitors Welcome!*

by Vicki Hudson

Beyond aesthetics, the roof minimizes energy use, pollution, and lessens the flow of runoff into the city's storm water system

As the concept of sustainability becomes better understood and accepted, green roofs are frequently in the news. So the fact that Grand Rapids Community College has just completed a green roof on top of their Applied Technology Center (ATC) may not seem like big news. But

the way it will be used is.

You will be able to actually see this green roof up close and learn from it.

The project, paid for with a grant from The Steelcase Foundation, has been a long-time goal of GRCC, especially the college's Sustainability Council. The top floor

of the ATC was chosen because of the space, the structural advantages and, most important, the potential to include a viewing deck. There was also room for a second, lower deck outside the culinary program's Heritage Restaurant that offered space for a natural herb garden for students to



maintain and diners at the popular working classroom to view and enjoy.

A Project That Kept Growing In Scope

As it was installed, Ter Horst & Rinzema Construction kept the project ahead of schedule and under budget allowing the original pan for 12,000 sq. ft. to expand to 25,000 sq. ft. across the roof, as well as the deck that extends from the Heritage restaurant.

Students of all ages, as well as the public will be encouraged to learn about the plants and the roof's benefits as well as sustainability, the concept of using resources prudently so that those same resources will be available to future generations, too.

"I think The Steelcase Foundation liked the idea that our roof will not only use sustainability principles, but teach them as well," said Andrew Bowne, executive director of GRCC's Foundation, the group that sought the grant. "All the theory and benefits come to life right in front of the observer."

What it Means to be Green

Why cover a roof with plants, you may ask. Let's have a mini-lesson right now.

Before there is anything built on a piece of land the area is usually covered with grass and trees. When buildings come, plants go. This often creates an "urban heat island," an excess of cement structures that produce a hot spot that can actually affect weather, even contribute to violent storms. But when that lost green space is replaced, the heat is reduced—the vegetation cools and slows the air and even helps settle and detoxify pollution.

Thomas Smith, director of facilities for GRCC, points out that there are many benefits to a green roof, some less visible than others. "There's the ecological side to it all," he said, looking out over the recently completed roof

from the third-floor vantage point. "The roof itself can actually save the college money because it enhances the roof's longevity and provides insulation year-around. It even enhances acoustics in the building."

Smith added that the surrounding community gets a bonus as well. Green roofs absorb rain, a feature that provides some relief to the city's storm water system—lessening the threat of overflow that pollutes our rivers that flow into Lake Michigan.

We've Covered Everything

All this and it is pretty, too.

The little Sedum plants are drought-tolerant succulents that come in shades of green, purple, yellow, pink and white, and are found around the world but only north of the equator, including above the Arctic Circle. Most have five petals, five sepals (leafy structure around the base of the flower), five carpels (seed pods) and ten stamens, but some do vary.

GRCC's roof has two green shades and a purple variety, though from late Fall to Spring, it will be just as brown and snow covered as most of our Michigan foliage.

***Come visit soon and see for yourself. Or, If you would like a preview, visit www.grcc.edu/sustainability**



For additional information, contact Gary Burbridge, Director of Sustainability: gburbrid@grcc.edu

GRCC Green Roof

Initial Project Size: 17,450 sq. ft.

Project Architect: GMB

Landscape Architect: GMB

General Contractor: Ter Horst & Rinzema Construction Co.

Green Roof System: LiveRoof LLC

Green Roof Supplier/Installer: Summit Landscape Management, Inc.

CAMPUS UPDATE

New President Search Committee Announced

The GRCC Board of Trustees has expanded the presidential search committee to 19 members as opposed to 12 in the first round. The process will meet the guidelines as directed by the Open Meetings Act as committee members review and make recommendations to the Board. The Board unanimously selected the following individuals to serve on the new committee.

Presidential Search Committee

Name	District	Position
Jim Buzzitta	Ada	Alumni
Gary Schenk	Ada	BOT Chairperson
Jan Maggini	Wyoming	BOT Secretary
Ellen James	Grand Rapids	BOT Treasurer
Lorraine Fortuna	Grand Rapids	CEBA Group (representing CEBA, ESP, & POLC)
Chris Arnold	Wyoming	Diversity Center
Jeff Geitzen	Grand Rapids	GRCC Foundation
Donna Kragt	Wyoming	IRP
George Waite	Cedar Springs	M-TEC
Moss Ingram	Forest Hills	Professor, Computer
Nikki Smith-Banks	Kentwood	Professor, Criminal Justice
Alejandro Saldivar	Grandville	Professor, Math
Laurie Foster	Grand Rapids	Professor, Physical Sciences
Steve Abid	Comstock Park	Professor, Social Sciences
Sarah Wiltenburg	Sparta	Student
David Selmon	Grand Rapids	Student Services
Bob Partridge	Ada	VP Finance
Debra Muller	Grand Rapids	Community Member
Mike Shabler	Rockford	Community Member

Applications and nominations for president are being accepted through November 2, 2008, with the search remaining open until the position is filled.

West Michigan Area Manufacturers Open to New Ideas



At the recent Diversify and Multiply Conference, sponsored by GRCC and the West Michigan Science & Technology Institute, area experts gave presentations on how to retool or diversify your manufacturing business to include profitable medical device products. The seminar was a sellout with over 120 attendees representing about 50 different West Michigan companies. Julie Parks, head of GRCC's Continuing Ed programs, said the attendance was an indicator that Michigan manufacturers are receptive to change and innovation.

Must CC TV: What's Playing on Comcast Cable Channel 28

"Cooking
with Angus"
NEW EPISODES

"You, Me and
Dessert"
NEW EPISODES

Eric Heller's
Innovation
Presentation

Association
of Builders LEED
Test Preparation

A Selection of
Grand Rapids
Symphony
performances at
DeVos Hall

First Amendment
Free Food Festival

2008/2009 Diversity
Lecture Series
Taped Lectures

Teacher Education
Pathways

For additional
programming
details, visit
www.grcc.tv

GRCC Goes Tobacco Free

Grand Rapids Community College will become a tobacco free campus November 20 of this year.

The idea of a smoke-free campus originated in late 2007 with GRCC's Academic Governance Council, a representative body made up largely of faculty. Since then the college has surveyed students and employees, studied the efforts of other organizations, and consulted with Dr. Tom Peterson from Spectrum Hospital, known nationally for his expertise on why and how to effectively achieve a no-smoking environment.

"This wellness initiative will further enable us to offer resources that will improve the health and productivity of our employees and students. A cross-college team of faculty, staff, and students have done a great deal to prepare for our November 20 target date," said Cynthia Springer, vice president of Organizational Development and coordinator of the cross-college committee. "We want our timing to coincide with the American Cancer Society's 'Great American Smokeout' day."

GRCC's tobacco free campus will align with that of Spectrum Health's Butterworth campus on the south and west sides creating a contiguous tobacco free area. All other locations GRCC owns are included, as are facilities used by the college.

Getting the Word Out

An extensive communications campaign will be used to educate people who work, study or visit the GRCC campus on the benefits of being tobacco free. The college also intends to partner with other agencies that have health and cessation programs in place.

"We want to do everything we can to create a safe, healthy environment for everyone on our campus," said GRCC Interim President Anne Mulder.

Vice President for College Relations Patrick Cwayna added "Education is our business, and we want to share cessation tools, support and information with everyone on campus. We know that being tobacco free has a positive effect on community wellness, on employee benefit costs, on college maintenance expenses, and on an individual's pocketbook. And that's what we want to communicate."

"We know that being tobacco free has a positive effect on community wellness."

—Patrick Cwayna

GRCC
Tobacco Free

November 20, 2008

**A HEALTHIER,
SAFER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
FOR EVERYONE.**

Need more information? Want to quit?
Go to grcc.edu/tobaccofree

Grand Rapids
Community
College

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PROGRAM NOTES



Nursing Program Offers Year-Around Schedule to Meet Health Care Challenges

by Vicki Hudson

It's no secret.

We all know there is a nursing shortage looming in our futures. Too many aging folks; too few nurses to meet the high—and steadily increasing—demand. GRCC's Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program has felt the squeeze even more because of its stringent standards and reputation for faculty excellence. But when the waiting list hit five years, program principals believed it was time to take action.

"That was just too much," said Director of Nursing Programs Margaret Bowles. "When we pride ourselves on meeting our community's needs, that was just not acceptable."

"We were responding to a community need to increase the number of graduates from our Nursing Programs."

—Fiona Hert



Year-Around Course Schedule Developed

Also not acceptable was "watering down" GRCC's standards, so a group was formed to weigh options. The solution was a curriculum that will sustain three admission times per year—rather than the current two—and provide affordability, availability, and improved use of clinical sites and campus classrooms. The seemingly simple solution to just offer alternative

class times was not implemented because data collected from nursing programs in Michigan and nationwide indicated low success and enrollment rates for weekend/evening programs.

Demand on faculty under this new year-around program will increase, but workloads can be

Admission to GRCC's ADN program is now offered three times per year, opening the door for more students.

spread over three academic semesters allowing for continued compliance with academic standards in the ADN program without adding full time faculty positions. The new format also means better use of clinical sites at area hospitals where students gain valuable hands-on experience providing patient care under the

supervision of GRCC faculty. This also alleviates some of GRCC's on-going campus space crunch.

"We were responding to community need to increase the number of graduates from our Nursing Programs. This was a solution to their request," said GRCC's Dean, School of Workforce Development, Fiona Hert.

Making Time for More Graduates

Hert explained that the solution lay in creative scheduling. "This way we can offer a year-around program that decreases the number of months a student is in school from 26 to 18 while also increasing the number of graduates per year by approximately 30. Before, we would admit 40 students twice a year. Beginning in Winter '09, we will enroll 36 students three times per year, including summer, so we expect decreased attrition and increased numbers of graduates per year due to the continuity of the program. This will also help relieve the pressure on clinical facilities as student placements will now be spread out over three semesters instead of two."

Students will continue to have access to services on GRCC's campus, such as Disability and Occupational Support, Counseling, Health Education Learning Lab, and Financial Aid. Ongoing needs will be monitored as student population increases.

"We know that student services increase the likelihood of a student's success, said Gilda Gely, GRCC provost. "It is part and parcel of every program here."

New Programs Respond To Health Industry Demands

The healthcare industry is booming in West Michigan, and GRCC is keeping pace with a series of new programs developed by its Continuing Education & Professional Development (CEPD) staff. Here is a quick rundown:

- Though our partnerships with Spectrum Health and St. Mary's Hospital, CEPD offers Patient Registration Specialist and Health Unit Coordinator classes. Both training programs are for entry-level positions and are in high demand in area hospitals.
- Continuing Education provides programs for Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs), including Advanced Acute Care and Dementia Care. These additional skills for CNAs often lead to more responsibility and an increase in pay, as well as continue their education in nursing.
- Following the successful launch of our Pharmacy Technician Training program, GRCC is now offering additional sections in Grand Rapids as well as at our Ottawa County M-TEC in partnership with the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District.
- New this fall, CEPD is launching a pilot program offering continuing education units (CEUs) specifically designed for the wellness professional. The program, entitled **Insights into Optimal Health: Steps for Living Healthy and Being Well**, offers social workers, nurses, dental professionals, and any other health-care provider, tools and information focused on ways to help patients, clients and themselves become healthier in body, mind and spirit.

GRCC Paves Way For Pharmacy Technicians

The need for certified pharmacy technicians is projected to reach over 80,000 in the next four years. GRCC is ready to help fill this need. The college worked with area pharmacies and hospitals to develop a 32-week pre-certification class that takes students through the certification process step by step—covering everything the student needs to prepare for the Pharmacy Technician Board Exam. Each section is taught by professional pharmacists and features hands-on learning through internship programs with pharmacies throughout West Michigan.

PROGRAM NOTES

Pilot Program to Help Athletes Make the Grade Kicks Off This Fall

by Vicki Hudson

Athletes attending GRCC will be running towards two goals this fall thanks to a new academic initiative. The Student-Athlete Academic Support Program (SAASP) will help GRCC student-athletes balance academic and athletic demands by providing the structure and support needed to succeed in both arenas.

Interim President Dr. Anne Mulder said the program forms a vital connection with the college's main focus. "We know the value of athletics to a well-rounded, healthy individual, but academics are our focus here," she explained. "Too often we look at athletics and academics as an either/or proposition, but students benefit most when the two are intertwined."

Under SAASP, the Athletic Department

"Too often we look at athletics and academics as an either/or proposition, but students benefit most when the two are intertwined." —Dr. Anne Mulder



will work closely with two of GRCC's student services programs—Counseling and Career Services and the Academic Support Center—to enhance the academic, athletic, career, and personal development experience for all student-athletes. All first year student-athletes will receive academic counseling and advising in



Through a new pilot program student-athletes will no longer be at risk of being sidelined by classwork challenges.

conjunction with tutoring and peer academic coaching to provide seamless academic support.

The pilot will include the men's football and women's basketball team members and serve approximately 71 students. All GRCC sports programs may eventually fall under the SAASP umbrella. There are currently nine sports teams at GRCC, including men's and women's basketball, men's and women's tennis, men's football, golf and baseball, and women's volleyball and softball.

SAASP Coordinator Raju Hedge views the program as an opportunity "to provide our student-athletes the best opportunity to meet all of their goals. The program is designed to help our student-athletes be successful in the athletic arena as well as their academic life at GRCC.

GRCC First in State to Earn Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation

GRCC was recently granted accreditation for its Child Development associate degree program by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Commission in Washington, D.C. GRCC is the first college in Michigan to earn this accreditation.

The program is

accredited for seven years without conditions. The main areas of strength cited were: faculty excellence, administrative support, and high-quality field experiences at both the GRCC Lab Preschool and in the community.

The NAEYC accreditation system establishes professional preparation standards

to raise the quality of teacher education, and in turn raise the quality of early childhood education programs serving young children.

"Teacher quality is a crucial component in providing high-quality early childhood education to millions of children across the country," said NAEYC

spokesperson Alison Lutton. "Accredited associate degree programs provide a strong foundation for the diverse pool of early childhood teachers that we need in the field."

Federal Head Start regulations call for an associate's degree or higher for teachers, and many states include early childhood

associate degrees in their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems for child care and preschool programs. NAEYC's professional standards for early childhood degree programs provide a high measure of quality by which programs can be evaluated.

Team Effort Improves Look and Utility of Learning Space

Flexibility merges with utility in space that accommodates the needs of both teachers and students

by Dr. Frank Conner

It was almost 10 years ago that now retired counselor Marie Pokora asked President Olivarez for a few dollars for plants to make the counseling office more inviting to students. Dr. Olivarez honored her request, but challenged her to extend the idea of enhancing the college's physical environment beyond her own office. Marie's efforts led to the formation of a diverse group of GRCC employees who became the initial Learning Environments Team (LET) and drafted the document, "Universal Guidelines For an Enhanced Physical Learning Environment," that still serves as the blueprint for any new building or renovation at the college.

A Dynamic New Project: Peter and Pat Cook Academic Hall

One of the LET's most significant efforts began with a generous donation from Peter and Pat Cook. This money was allocated to renovate part of GRCC's North Building, now renamed as the Peter and Pat Cook Academic Hall. Instead

of using these dollars to make small improvement throughout the five floors, it was decided to direct all of the money into a complete remake of the first floor.

The result is a space unlike any learning environment at the college.

The rooms are large enough to accommodate multiple teaching arrangements. The student desks and chairs can be easily moved to create a custom learning space. Technology is readily available for professors and, if needed, for students. The hallways are large



with space to meet and study. The walls between classroom and hallway are glass so anyone passing by can see into the classroom. Modern, vibrant paint schemes adorn the walls. White

boards are available on multiple walls.

How Did We Do? What the Research Said

The college wanted to validate the idea that environment does have an impact on student learning. To that end, the college went one step further and added a research component to this remodel. Very simply, the college wanted to answer the question: "What learning environments best support diverse teaching strategies?"

To get answers, college leadership asked the Institute for Faculty Research on Teaching and Learning, led by Dr. Frank Conner, to design and implement a study centered on the



The college wanted to validate the idea that environment does have an impact on student learning.

newly remodeled space. The results were encouraging. Faculty found the space to be highly functional. The size of the rooms were reported as particularly valuable to the faculty. The ability to easily reorganize the room and the access to technology was also highly regarded.

The research provided a few surprising insights. There had been concern about the open spaces

and, in particular, the glass classroom walls. However, participants said they believed the space was very powerful in communicating purpose—that of a place of learning. The new environment also challenged faculty to expand and experiment with their approach to teaching. One quote summarized the experience for many: "This room allows me to be the teacher I imagine myself being."

Back to the Future

The hard work of the LET and the research on Cook Hall demonstrate that physical space does have a significant impact on faculty practices and student learning. As part of this study, GRCC has made a commitment to its students, faculty, and the community to diligently make improvements in its physical environment to increase the learning possibilities for everyone who walks on our campus.

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Interim President Anne E. Mulder

It was the first day of fall semester, a day that marks the passing of summer and one rarely met with wild enthusiasm.

But this day was different. It was the first time Dr. Anne E. Mulder addressed the entire faculty and staff of GRCC as interim president. She got a standing ovation.

Maybe this was because she has long been part of the GRCC community—returning after successful stints at other education institutions. Maybe it's because she's been instrumental in so many of the college's accomplishments. Or maybe



it's because she still feels the commitment GRCC has been known for since the day it opened its doors.

"The last time I left, it was a great college," she

to the college's mission; broadening workforce development offerings beyond just evening college classes, working with disenfranchised populations like dislocated workers and older students (whom we now call "non-traditional" students). Mulder was also involved in the college's early distance learning efforts offering non-traditional delivery formats, such as course by newspaper, an early precursor to options that now include TV and on-line courses. As she described it, "It was a very creative time for the college."

As the college grew, Mulder grew with it, moving through positions like Special Assistant to the President and Dean of Academic Services. During these times she was also active in the community on the YWCA board, chairing the Arts Council, volunteering at the Grand Rapids Art Museum, performing in local theatre productions, chairing the Arts Festival, and working with Fountain St. Church.

Looking to the future Mulder's vision is to always consider the presence of the college within the larger community.

In between stints at GRCC, Mulder earned her doctorate from the University of Michigan and was later selected as the President of Lake Michigan College, a post she held for nine years. She has done extensive work with two- and four-year and graduate schools. She won numerous education awards and served on several national boards, such as the American Council of Education and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). She also served as the first woman president of the AACC's President's Academy.

Meeting the needs of the West Michigan community is one of the reasons she feels alternative methods of course delivery are so important. "Technology defines much of what we do now, especially given the difference in learning styles and the demands on people's time," she said, "My grandchildren have taught me how to learn and see; conceptually they have a whole other way of looking at the world."

Above all, she says, we must remain hopeful:

"The mural [on the first floor of the Main Building] is a great reminder that the college Jesse Davis envisioned almost 100 years ago has gone through appreciable changes as it has continued to grow with the same sense of a commitment to excellence and student success. We may cloak it under different terms, we may see it differently, we may package it differently—but there is no reason for us to be anything other than hopeful. We can create our own preferred future. It's important that we pay attention and make sure that learning is the business we're in."

Mulder's vision is to always consider the presence of the college within the larger community



said. "When I returned it was extraordinary. Great teaching has always occurred here—this place is built on a solid tradition. But now it's carried to the next level. The commitment to quality initiatives really speaks to this institution in a very profound way."

Mulder's career began at what was then known as Grand Rapids Junior College as an adjunct professor in English. GRCC Board of Trustees Chairperson Gary Schenk was one of the students she worked with when she served as Student Activities Director. Mulder held numerous posts at the college, and was highly active in the community. All told she saw the college through four leaders (Visser, Fink, McCarthy and Calkins), "and I have a story about each one of them," she smiled.

Much of her time at GRCC was spent laying the foundation for many of the projects now key

FOUNDATION NEWS

Dave Custer New Chair of Foundation Board

by Derek DeVries

The Grand Rapids Community College Foundation Board has a new leader.

Prominent business leader and GRCC Alum Dave Custer has been named chairman of the GRCC Foundation Board, a position once reserved for the college president. A recent policy change removed this obligation from the president—a move for the better, according to Custer: “When you’re in the thick of things [as a college president], you can’t always see the forest for the trees. Time and availability become major issues. This change will bring some new insight to the Foundation’s operations.”

Custer is a 19-year member of the Board, with an association with GRCC that goes back even further.

“I went to what was then GRJC,” he recalled. “It really gave me a chance to get a college education. My parents could not afford to send me to a private or four-year college away from Grand Rapids.” Custer also worked in the summers to save money for his eventual transfer to Western Michigan University.

When he arrived at WMU, Custer felt well-prepared. He now understands the studies that have frequently shown community college students often perform better in four-



Custer cites a need to emphasize the college’s unique mission of serving a broader segment of the population than four-year schools.

year universities than their native underclass populations. Going to GRJC gave me a good grounding for my education,” says Custer, who is now CEO of Custer Workplace Interiors.

Down to Business

Custer’s goals for the Foundation are ambitious. A key element is to build on the very visible success of the Open Door fundraising campaign and to get in front of the community more. “In the past we’ve been reticent to ask for support, but it’s important to do it now with the cutbacks in state spending,” he explained.

The Foundation also plans to branch out into

the community and make the case for the college’s value to outlying areas. Visible signs of this effort are seen in new offerings in Byron Center, Rockford, and Grandville high schools, plus an invitation to step up services in and around Holland.

Custer cites a need to emphasize the college’s unique mission of serving a broader segment of the population than four-year schools: “We can handle the person who wants to move on to get an associates degree, or we can prepare the student who wants to go to a four-year school and, meanwhile, we can give people the continuing education and professional development they need.”

His message for the community is simple: “Get ready—we need your help. We’re going to be more visible and we’re going to be coming to you.”



Wisner and Bottrall Donation Energizes ATC

Gifts from the Wisner and Bottrall families will benefit students by enabling program changes and additions, and providing for updates to facilities and equipment in the Applied Technology Center (ATC).

“These are local families with a long history of supporting GRCC and the community,” said GRCC Associate Vice President for College Advancement Andrew Bowne. “They are very committed to helping because they understand the value of a college education to both the student and the community. Their gift creates an endowment that offers a better experience to both.”

In honor of the Wisner and Bottrall families’ generosity the Applied Technology Center will be renamed the Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

Total grants received 6/1/08 to-date: **\$5,143,544**

Total grants received 9/1/07 to-date: **\$6,830,974**

RECENT GRANTS:

- US Dept. of Education Early Reading First: **\$4,494,866** for preschool literacy training
- MI Dept. of Adult Education School Section 107: **\$188,183** for Learning Corner West GED/ESL
- ACSET Employment Services: **\$1,313,044** for MichiganWorks! employment services
- AT&T Education Technology: **\$25,000**—highly competitive national grant for interned access for TRIO students

Students Get the Bug for Biology 204

The experience was one of revelation



by Dr. Matt Douglas

The real title of Biology 204 at GRCC is “Studies in Natural History,” but it quickly became “Bug Camp 204,” the name made up for it by one student’s children. The kids thought the class sounded funny, but once their mother e-mailed them that, “... bracken fern, *Pteridium aquilinum*, has a cadre of protective ants and spiders that feed off sugars and amino acids produced by ‘extrasoral nectaries’ prior to the

pinnae filling out and producing toxic compounds such cyanogenic and cardiac glycoside compounds...” well, they left her alone.

This was serious stuff!

And what better way to be introduced to the fauna and flora of West Michigan than to experience it first hand during an intense rain-or-shine field study of 660 diverse acres at the new Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, just 45 minutes south of Grand Rapids?

Beauty is in the eye of the holder

The mental, emotional, and educational transition of my students was nothing short of spectacular. Pierce Cedar Creek Institute is not only an environmental education center, but a biological field station where students—with their professors from over a dozen contributing colleges and universities—can study nature in numerous habitats as well as

conduct research. The staff and accommodations are outstanding; the food delicious. It is a student’s dream: the best of outdoor nature observation and the best of room and board.

The mission of Pierce Cedar Creek Institute is to promote environmental education, research, preservation, and appreciation. The richness of the terrain, which includes a private “kettle” lake (left over from the last glaciers

as they retreated over 10,000 years ago), a mini Grand Canyon with relict species from the Pleistocene, recovering fields, forests of different composition and maturity, swamps, bogs, fens, and a beautiful trout stream (with Massasauga rattle snakes living in old crayfish burrows).

For my students, the experience was one of revelation. After taking introductory biology, zoology, and/or botany, they finally had the op-



Study subjects are often elusive and uncooperative

canvass the species diversity out at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Next summer will provide even more students with the opportunity to explore, appreciate, and understand the complex and diverse habitats of this beautiful research area throughout the season. With this, the mission of Pierce Cedar Creek Institute—and that of GRCC as well—to promote environmental education, research, preservation, and appreciation, will be met.

“Dr. Matt” has taught at GRCC since 1993 and is Professor of Zoology.

portunity to learn about hundreds of native Michigan species of animals, plants, and fungi under field conditions. Extensive field collection and subsequent laboratory work involved the identification (often down to the species level) of over 427 different organisms in just one week. This course combined field and laboratory experiences, along with a continuous barrage of my on-the-spot

mini-lectures, throughout the weeklong course. Students often hiked more than five miles per day over rough terrain, waded through streams in search of vertebrates and invertebrates, and got stuck in bogs and muck. But thankfully, there were no biting insects to spoil our observation and collection. The result was a group of physically exhausted but exhilarated students by dinnertime, with appetites not known

since childhood. And what do students think of this combined lecture, field, and laboratory experience? Here’s one response: “...you answered a million questions per day without ever becoming irritable or even dismissing the silliest out of hand; and most important, your paternal behavior and attitude somehow—in six days—managed to bring 11 students, of ages ranging from

19 to 45, together as colleagues and friends. This may not seem important on its face, but I can tell you that it facilitated an environment of accelerated learning; or to say it another way, I’ve never learned that much in so short a time.” That seemed to be the consensus of the group. A number of sections of Biology 204 are planned for next May, June, and August, to thoroughly

APPOINTMENTS



Fiona Hert is the newly appointed Dean of the School of

Workforce Development.



Professor Margaret Bowles is now Director of Nursing Programs.

Paula Sullivan has been named Associate Dean for Health, Criminal Justice, and the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education.

AWARDS AND HONORS

The School of Workforce Development successfully completed its second year of programming with the Grand Rapids Community Foundation Summer Health Care Career Academy for 9th and 10th graders. Sixty students attended.

GRCC Poet Professors Mursalata Muhammad and David Cope and will take part in the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park fall exhibition



of the sculpture of internationally acclaimed Spanish artist Jaume Plensa. Their work will be published and available in the Sculpture Galleries during the exhibition. They will also take part in a reading at Meijer

Gardens on November 11 at 7 p.m.



Howard Shanken accepted the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Ockerman Award as President of the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO)

for the development of the Michigan Transfer Network, a system that streamlines the exchange of class credit between colleges and universities. There are now over 750,000 course equivalences including entries from over 50 institutions.



Directed by Spectrum Theatre's **Shelly Urbane**, GRCC's student theatrical production entitled "Blue/Orange" was nominated for three Grand Awards, including "Outstanding College Production."



Professor **Mike DeVivo** has successfully succeeded in making GRCC a Charter Member of the International Geographical Honors Society. GRCC is the only community college to receive this honor.



Professor David Cope is the new program coordinator for the Dyer Ives Poetry Contest. Cope brings extensive experience to the post, including serving as advisor to GRCC's *Display Magazine*, as a judge in the Ann Arbor Jewel

Heart Contest and the Kent District Libraries Teen Poetry Contest, and is himself a published poet.



The GRCC Choir, under the direction of Professor Duane Davis, traveled to Washington D.C. this past May to perform in a concert at Kennedy Center.



English Department ESP (Educational Support Person) Gail Brown has published a book for the non-traditional student. Brown's book *Where are the Footnotes? A Guide for the*

Non-traditional Female College Student is based on her experience as a wife and step-mother, the shared events in the lives of her friends, and her personal experience as a first-time college student at age 50. The book can be purchased through the author's website at www.wherethefootnotes.com.



Biology Professor Matt Douglas has authored a new book, *Mary's Voyage* (Sheridan House Press, New York), a true story about Mary Caldwell, the helmswoman; of a boat she and her husband,

John, used in their attempt to sail around the world. Mary, John, and their children became the first family to attempt such a voyage, using only a sextant and dead reckoning to guide them across thousands of miles of ocean. Her story may also lead to a motion picture based on Douglas's screenplay. The book is available through amazon.com and in bookstores throughout North America and Europe.

TRAINING SOLUTIONS

The number of students served by Training Solutions in fiscal year 2007-2008 was 7849, an increase of over 168% from '06-07. The year-end balance for Training Solutions was profitable for the 3rd year in a row.

GRCC will provide training for approximately 400 employees at Priceline.com's new West Michigan location. The contract was funded by a \$200,000 training grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). GRCC played a significant role in the recruitment of Priceline's move to Wyoming, Michigan as a part of the college's growing partnership with the Right Place and the MEDC.

GRCC's Older Learner Center is celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a reception preceding the Diversity Lecture by Amy Dickinson, "Aging in the 21st Century" on November 12. The reception marks a decade of providing education for people who work with the aging, for people whose lifestyles are affected by aging family members and for everyone who enjoys life-long learning. For details about attending the reception, call Mike Faber at (616) 234-3483.

A conference for older workers was hosted by the **American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Steelcase, and GRCC.** The program drew 350 participants. Many of the sessions were presented by GRCC faculty and staff.

A \$270,000 training Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incumbent worker grant was obtained for **Plastech Engineered Products** in Ottawa county through Michigan Works! and the Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

A partnership was recently formed with Stiles Machinery to offer on-site supervisor training at their locations throughout the U.S.

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DIVERSITY

2008-2009

Lecture Series XIV

Amy Dickinson November 12, 2008

Author, Syndicated Columnist,
NPR Commentator
"Aging in the 21st Century"



In celebration of GRCC's Older Learner Center's 10th Anniversary

Amy Dickinson is a familiar voice to many. As a columnist her "Ask Amy" column for the *Chicago Tribune* is syndicated in over 200 newspapers nationwide. She is a regular panelist on NPR's "Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me" and has been featured on "All Things Considered." Her work focuses on family life and parenting, often drawing from her experiences as a single parent and member of a large extended family.

You are invited to stay for a brief party honoring the Older Learner Center recognized by AARP for the breadth of their services to adults over age 50.

B. D. Wong December 3, 2008

Tony Award-Winning Actor,
Author, Activist
"Racial Self-image and
the Model Minority Myth"



Known to many as forensic psychiatrist Dr. George Huang on NBC's "Law and Order: Special Victims Unit," B.D. Wong is also an author, Broadway actor, and accomplished speaker. He feels his career as an actor has forced him to not only empower himself, but led him to be more articulate about the issues of racial self-image, race-based rejection, Asian-American parental pressure, and the "model minority myth."

Prince Cedza Dlamini February 4, 2009

Humanitarian, Social Entrepreneur
"Global Forgiveness
and Connectedness"



Cedza Dlamini is an impassioned humanitarian, social entrepreneur and visionary. His vision is to create a unified global order by establishing global networks of young leaders working collectively to address world problems, such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, hunger, and illiteracy. As the grandson of Nelson Mandela, he travels the world to carry on the activism and investment in community.

Shannon Brownlee March 11, 2009

Author, Economist, Health Care Analyst
"Debunking The Myth of Poor
Care for American Veterans"



Shannon Brownlee is a Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation. The New York Times named her best-seller *Overtreated: Why Too Much Medicine is Making Us Sicker and Poorer* as the #1 Economics Book of the Year. Brownlee shares the story of the Veterans Health Administration—which has gone from a picture of all that was wrong with American health care to a symbol of all that can be right.

Bob and Alecia Woodrick
Diversity Learning Center



For more information,
please call (616) 234-3390
or visit grcc.edu/lecture



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