

Student Spotlight: David Gonzalez



As a first-generation college student David Gonzalez said he chose community college after graduating from Jackson High

School because enrolling in a university was uncharted territory.

He transferred to Grand Valley in 2012 and immediately immersed himself in activities.

Gonzalez, a senior Spanish major, has been involved with the Latino Student Union and Hermanos. He also belongs to intramural clubs, Intervarsity Bible Study and has held a leadership position with the Pre-Med Club.

This year, Gonzalez is president of the Latino Student Union and said he is thankful for the opportunity to engage with other cultural organizations such as Sabrosismo and La Tertulia. Culture is especially important to him. He said, "My Puerto Rican heritage is something especially dear to me, and which serves as a driving force in my life."

A self-professed literature and language nerd, Gonzalez believes that there is so much to be learned from stories. He enjoys reading and said that his love for reading began when he read the Bible with his grandparents and great-grandparents.

When he isn't busy with extracurricular activities and applying for fellowship opportunities, he enjoys running, biking and snowboarding. He is looking forward to future opportunities and is grateful for being able to attend Grand Valley.

"Grand Valley has shaped me and has offered me opportunities to realize some of these goals in some very important ways," he said.



"No More Silence." Question: *Do these words have as much intensity today as the March on Washington in 1963?*

"On August 28 1963, more than 200,000 demonstrators took part in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in the nation's capital. The march was successful in pressuring the administration of **John F. Kennedy** to initiate a strong federal civil rights bill in Congress. During this event, Martin Luther King delivered his memorable **"I Have a Dream"** speech."

Answer: Yes, fifty years later, the intensity of civil rights demonstrations can reach millions more than the 200,000 demonstrators on the March on Washington. Demonstrators are now coordinating through social media, Facebook, Twitter and mainstream media, and involve millions of civil rights supporters simultaneous.

Why then is the Dr. Martin Luther King commemoration week promoting its theme, "No More Silence"? Despite massive demonstration efforts, and hash tag comments that demand justice where injustice prevail, the country's racial inequity is still alive and well.

In an effort to continue the conversation on racial inequity, Grand Valley State University welcomes Mrs. **Sybrina Fulton**, who since the 2012 shooting death of her son, Trayvon Martin, has dedicated her life to transforming a family tragedy into social change as one method of seeking justice for her son. Also joining Ms. Fulton is **Marc Lamont Hill**, author and activist, who is a journalist for the Philadelphia Daily News and a regular commentator for CNN, MSNBC and Fox News Channel.

The Trayvon Martin tragedy sparked protest demonstrations across the nation. Demonstrators wore hoodies as a reminder of the image of Trayvon Martin wearing a hoodie when he was killed. The hoodie is one symbolic reminder that "No More Silence" can be proclaimed by anyone wearing a hoodie. Other demonstrators proclaim **#IamTrayvon** on social media. Celebrity demonstrators wore hoodies at their esteemed award telecasted programs.



Join Grand Valley State University during commemoration week honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Visit www.gvsu.edu/mlk for more information.

Native American Student Association Hosts Day of Service

Kristie Scanlon, Assistant Director

Members of the Native American Student Association hosted a Day of Service on November 8, in recognition of Native American Heritage Month.

Students, faculty, staff and community members participated in a clean-up effort of the Norton Mounds, a



national historic landmark located along the Grand River that contains burial artifacts more than 2,000 years old.

This high-impact learning experience gave participants the opportunity to learn more about the Native American culture and experiences in the Grand Rapids area.

Steve Perry, member of Grand Valley's Native American Advisory Board, facilitated a pre-service education program to educate participants before visiting the site. Because the area

is a sacred burial ground, knowing and understanding the history and background of this area was critically important for student learning.

The clean-up effort was a collaborative effort between the Native American Student Association, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Grand Rapids Public Museum.

The Native American Student Association plans to hold another clean-up day in the spring.



SAVE THE DATE Celebrating All Walks of Life Pow Wow

The Native American Student Association at Grand Valley will host its 16th annual Spring Pow Wow on Saturday and Sunday, April 11–12, in the Fieldhouse Arena.

This celebration will feature drummers, dancers and traditional vendors from across the region. Join us as we celebrate and bring awareness of Native American culture, tradition and heritage.

If you are interested in being involved in the program, contact NASA at gvsu_nasa@yahoo.com.



Summer Engineering Academy at University of Michigan

Michigan Introduction to Technology & Engineering (MITE) Session 2

MITE (Session 2) is a residential program for rising 10th-grade students that is made possible through a partnership with GEAR UP.

Participants in the two-week camp/program, studied mathematics, engineering concepts, communication and academic study skills. MITE students had opportunities to interact with engineering role models through tours, presentations and enrichment activities conducted by students, faculty and staff members.

A guidance component focused on preparation for college, including information about admissions, financial aid and success skills needed to do well in high school as well as college.



Tomas Jimenez, Jayla Jones and Yoel Garcia participated in MITE in July.

Laker Familia ORIENTATION

As part of the Latino Student Initiative, the Laker Familia Orientation was unveiled in Fall 2014. With support from the Provost's Office, the inaugural orientation was designed to welcome incoming Latino/a students to campus, help connect them with current students, faculty and staff members, and equip them with the skills to navigate campus and community resources.

The orientation program was developed through the collaborative work of many campus partners, including Admissions, Dean of Students, Division of Inclusion and Equity, Financial Aid, Office of Multicultural Affairs, University Counseling Center, Office of Student Life, Housing and Residence Life, Latin@ Faculty and Staff Association, University Libraries, and others.

Thirty-five Latino/a students participated in the three-day orientation in August. When they arrived on campus, parents and students were welcomed and greeted by more than 40 volunteers from campus, Hispanic Center of Western Michigan and the community. The first day concluded with a dinner reception attended by roughly 170 parents, relatives, siblings and students.



Some activities included faculty and student panel discussions, campus scavenger hunt, career development workshops, connection to mentors and lots of teambuilding!

Students who participated said the program helped prepare them for success at Grand Valley by learning to navigate campus resources and increasing their confidence. Selected student comments are below.

"Being the first in my family, I am overwhelmed, but this experience excited me even more!"

"I've learned that there are a lot of people who have backgrounds similar to mine and they share the same strengths and struggles as me."

"I learned that there is always help if you need it; use tutoring center/writing center, see academic advisor."

"I need to study differently/harder than high school, avoid procrastination, get to know my professors, ask questions, go to class."

Plans are underway for the Laker Familia 2015 Orientation! People who would like to be involved can contact Raul Ysasi, affiliate professor of education, at ysasir@gvsu.edu.

Intersections Presents: Mia Mingus

Kristie Scanlon Assistant Director

Community educator and organizer Mia Mingus will give a dynamic presentation, "Building Transformative Responses to Violence," on February 24 in the Kirkhof Center, Grand River Room.

The event is an "Intersections" program hosted by the Milton E. Ford Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and Women's Center.

The three centers have enhanced their collective work through the development of "Intersections" programs and initiatives in an effort to help students look at their complex world through multiple dimensions including race, gender, sexual orientation, class status, etc.

Mingus is well-known for working for disability justice and transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse. She was recognized by the White House as a Champion of Change, an honor bestowed on Americans who do exemplary things to uplift their communities.

Mia Mingus: Building Transformative Responses to Violence

Winter 2015
Intersections Program
Tuesday, February 24, 2015
6:00 p.m. Grand River Room,
Kirkhof Center
LIB 100 & 201 Approved





WINTER 2015 Schedule of Events



January 19–24	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Week Visit www.gvsu.edu/mlk/ for complete details.
January & February	Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Celebration Visit www.gvsu.edu/oma for complete details.
February	Black History Month Visit www.gvsu.edu/oma for complete details.
February	Professionals of Color Lecture Series: Black History Month Visit www.gvsu.edu/oma for complete details
February 24	Intersections: Building Transformative Responses to Violence: Mia Mingus 2250 Russel H. Kirkhof Center 6:00–8:00 p.m.
March	César E. Chavez Celebration Visit www.gvsu.edu/oma for complete details.
March 21	R.I.C.E Conference: Realizing and Addressing Issues in our Culture and Education DeVos Campus 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
April 11 & 12	16th Annual Spring Pow Wow Hosted by the Native American Student Association at Grand Valley GVSU Fieldhouse Arena

Find us on:



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For the latest news and events, check us out online at www.gvsu.edu/oma
Archived copies of OMAs newsletters can be accessed via the above website.

About Us

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) fosters a respect for and an appreciation of the history, tradition and culture of different ethnic groups and empowers all students to be active participants in Grand Valley's community through programs that promote academic, social and cultural development for students.

OMA's vision is to promote acceptance and appreciation of an inclusive campus community that values the diversity of people, backgrounds and perspectives of each individual.

Guiding Principles:

- Fosters a campus climate that respects and appreciates the history, culture, and traditions of various ethnic groups.
- Empowers students to be active participants in the Grand Valley community.
- Stimulates and encourages intercultural awareness and dialogue among university members.
- Takes an active role in promoting academic, social, cultural, leadership and professional development for students.

The OMA staff serves as a resource for students, faculty and staff members on issues of inclusion, diversity, multiculturalism and interculturalism.

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