

# INCLUSION *extra!*



GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
INCLUSION AND EQUITY  
DIVISION

Spring 2013

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# Looking ahead

By Jeanne J. Arnold

The voice for chief diversity officers across the country is the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, or NADOHE. Grand Valley is privileged to have a seat at the table of this national discussion. I am honored to have been re-elected for another term as a board member of NADOHE, and having returned from the annual conference in Washington D.C., I am reenergized for the continued work on the tasks ahead of us. There is still much left to be done.

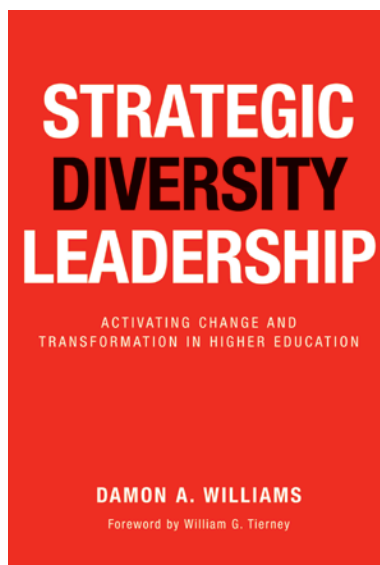
Of particular inspiration for me at the conference was Dr. Damon Williams' presentation, "*Navigating the Perfect Storm: Strategic Diversity Leadership in the New Economy*." Dr. Williams was a consultant to GVSU during the planning stages of establishing this division. In his talk, Dr. Williams discussed the model for implementing diversity initiatives in higher education, and also emphasized that we are working not just to implement a model, but are part of a movement. He also discussed the impact of changing demographics, challenges to affirmative action and societal inequities. These circumstances bring us to a point in time where our efforts towards diversity and inclusion are more urgently needed than ever. Given this "perfect storm" of factors, he argued that we must continue to be serious about keeping inclusion efforts at the forefront of our institutions.

As we reflect on the progress made at GVSU in the first five years of the Division of Inclusion and Equity's existence, we also turn to

the next five years. Two resources that will be significant for our community are Dr. Williams' books, "*Strategic Diversity Leadership – Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education*," and his upcoming companion work, "*The Chief Diversity Officer: Strategy, Structure and Change Management*," co-authored with Dr. Katrina Wade-Golden. I am currently reading the first book, and I want to encourage interested faculty, staff and students at GVSU to do the same.

It is important for the GVSU community to know that our campus has been recognized for its efforts in inclusion and equity. In Dr. Williams' second book, planned for release in May of this year, GVSU has the honor and distinction of being featured as a case study. Further, as a collaborator for a recent publication of the Association of American Medical Colleges ("*The Role of the Chief Diversity Officer in Academic Health Centers*"), Dr. Williams cited the journal article co-authored by myself and Marlene Kowalski-Braun as recommended reading. The article, titled "*The Journey to an Inaugural Chief Diversity Officer: Preparation, Implementation and Beyond*" appeared in "*Innovative Higher Education*" in 2011.

Not only have we carefully studied and crafted a strategic approach towards our diversity efforts, but we have demonstrated success in putting it into practice. We are well positioned to continue the journey and to push ourselves to achieve an even greater level of inclusive excellence.



## GVSU revises Student Code of Conduct

The Senior Management Team has approved revisions to Section 206.02 of GVSU's Student Code. Led by Pat Smith, the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee of the Campus Violence Prevention Team worked diligently to address and modify definitions of sexual assault and consent.

The revised Section 206.02 provides a clearer definition of "sexual assault," and includes a definition of "consent." Under Section 206.02, "consent" is defined as "clear, unambiguous, and voluntary agreement between the participants to engage in specific sexual acts." Consent cannot be inferred from silence, passivity, lack of active resistance, or the absence of a "no." Instead, a clear "yes," verbal or otherwise, is necessary. Consent cannot be obtained by intimidation, threat, coercion, or force. Consent cannot be obtained from a person who is

incapacitated from drugs, alcohol, or some other condition.

Sections 206.03 and 206.04 were also added to the Student Code to address dating/domestic violence and stalking.

These changes were made to protect our students and to ensure that our Student Code is consistent with the standards of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972. If you have any questions, please contact GVSU's Title IX Coordinator Dwight Hamilton at hamiltldw@gvsu.edu.

Grand Valley State University  
**STUDENT  
CODE**

# Hundreds participate in MLK, Jr. Commemoration Week activities



*Judge Glenda Hatchett, keynote speaker*

Hundreds of students, university employees and community members participated in activities that celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during Grand Valley's annual commemoration week, January 20-26.

It was the first year that classes were canceled, giving faculty, staff and students an opportunity to

listen to keynote speaker Judge Glenda Hatchett, walk in the silent march and take part in that day's planned social justice events.

Hatchett, who serves as the national spokesperson for Court Appointed Special Advocates, spoke before a standing-room-only crowd in the Kirkhof Center on January 21.

Hatchett stressed that the country's leaders are not following King's mission of building a beloved community. She cited Michigan statistics in which 24 percent of children live in poverty, and nearly 11 percent live in extreme poverty. Hatchett drew a connecting line from poverty to prison, stating that people who live in poverty are three times more likely to have a criminal record. "We have got to break this generational cycle. We can do better," she said. "You cannot fix it unless you understand it. Where is that beloved community King talked about?"

*Hundreds of students, university employees and community members participated in activities that celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during Grand Valley's annual commemoration week, January 20-26.*

All of the January 21 social justice activities were well-attended. Highlights included morning and afternoon sessions of a poverty



*NasCierra Sims, Muskegon sixth-grader*

simulation, making crafts for local shelters, and a reading marathon. A panel discussion in the afternoon drew about 60 people, who listened and participated in discussions about "America in the Age of Obama."

More than 400 people attended a free luncheon and watched President Obama's inauguration in the Kirkhof Center. A highlight of the luncheon was a presentation by Muskegon sixth-grader NasCierra Sims, who recited King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Majora Carter, an urban revitalizationist and host of the radio series "The Promised Land," was the keynote speaker on January 24. Her Kirkhof Center presentation was webcast to audiences in Holland and at the Eberhard Center.

Carter said she still lives in the South Bronx neighborhood where she grew up. This surprises her neighbors, who assume successful people want to move to successful, affluent neighborhoods.

Carter said she believes there are two types of real estate: one that assumes neighborhoods will improve through displacement, and another that assumes poor communities will stay poor.

She wants to create a third type, an economically diverse neighborhood of varied prices of housing, retail development, educational institutions and green spaces.

Carter has been successful in the Bronx. Her development projects include an 11-mile greenway, and a training program to teach residents skills to hold green jobs.

During the January 26 Day of Service, more than 190 students volunteered to serve at nine Grand Rapids locations. Some of the locations included Feeding America, Blandford Nature Center, Rays of Hope International and Alternative Pathways.

## First service award presented during MLK, Jr. Commemoration Week

The first recipient of Grand Valley's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award was Steepletown Neighborhood Services of Grand Rapids.

This organization offers programs and services to new immigrants. Within a nominating letter, the organization was cited for breaking down economic barriers by teaching money management, offering career exploration opportunities and a GED prep program.

Criteria for the award included making a positive impact on the lives of West Michigan residents.

Jeanne Arnold presented staff members Melanie Straub and Emilio Zamarripa (both GVSU alumni) the award on January 24, prior to the MLK, Jr. keynote presentation by Majora Carter.



*Melanie Straub and Emilio Zamarripa*



# Winter storm provides seed for next year's Black History Month

This year, a greatly anticipated event celebrating Black History Month was cancelled due to severe weather. Patrick Miles Jr., U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Michigan, was scheduled to present, "Effective Leadership and Service" on the evening of February 19. Unfortunately, that happened to be the night that classes were cancelled due to a severe winter storm. Rather than simply rescheduling Miles for another evening in March, Associate Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs Bobby Springer and his committee parlayed this turn of events into an opportunity to feature Miles in a kick-off event for Black History Month in 2014.

"He went to school with President Barack Obama – they went to Harvard together," Springer explains of Miles. "So they got the chance to connect. And one thing I wanted him to share was the importance of meeting people wherever you are, because you just never know where those friendships might lead. And that is probably the best example anybody could share of that – the President of the United States nominating you for a position, and it all leads back to meeting for the first time in college."

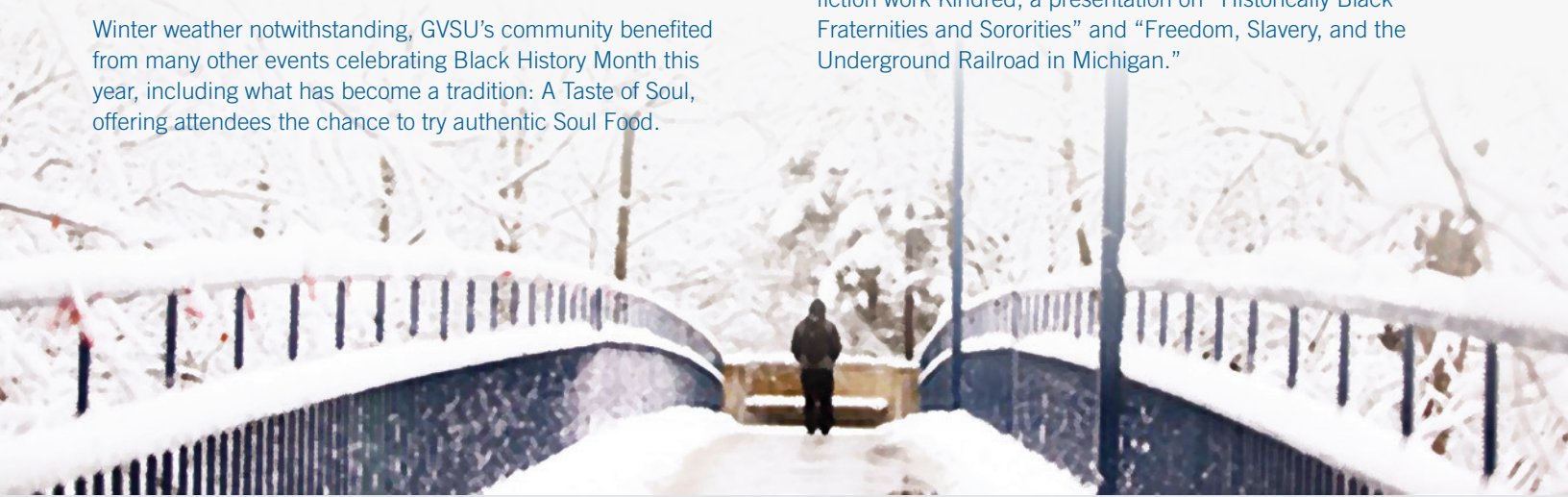
Winter weather notwithstanding, GVSU's community benefited from many other events celebrating Black History Month this year, including what has become a tradition: A Taste of Soul, offering attendees the chance to try authentic Soul Food.

Reverend Robert Jones, Sr. presented "Storytelling: The Roots of African American and Folk Traditions." "It was like a history lesson for me," says Springer. "He talked about the different types of music: the folk, the blues, the spiritual and how we find some of that music playing out today from many years ago."



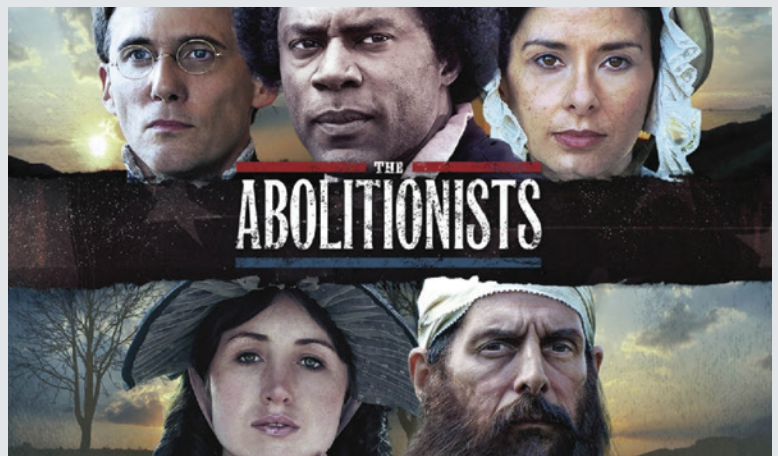
*Reverend Robert Jones, Sr.*

Other events included the annual Positive Black Women Comedy/Poetry Jam, a discussion panel exploring the science fiction work Kindred, a presentation on "Historically Black Fraternities and Sororities" and "Freedom, Slavery, and the Underground Railroad in Michigan."

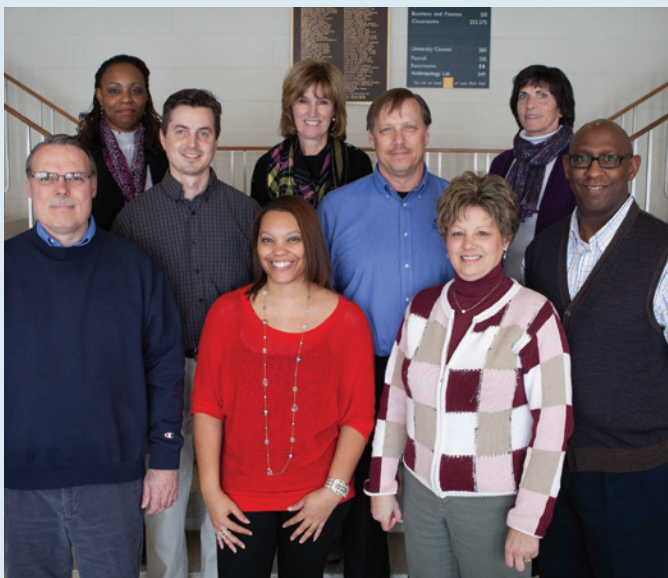


## "The Abolitionists"

In honor of Black History Month, the Division of Inclusion and Equity, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and WGUV Engage sponsored showings of "The Abolitionists" on the Allendale and Pew campuses. This three-part film series portrays the history of some of the central figures in the movement to abolish slavery in America. The Abolitionists were passionate anti-slavery activists who fought in one of the most important civil rights crusades in American history. This series brought to life the epic struggles of the men and women who worked tirelessly to help end slavery. The series premiered in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.



# “Spotlight” on the Finance and Administration Division



*Finance and Administration Inclusion and Equity Committee. Front row: Brad Newman, Chaunté Rodgers, Janet Aubil, Walter Moore. Second row: Brad Wallace, Bill Lucksted. Third row: Michelle McCloud, Sue Sloop, Kay Klosowski. Not pictured: Brandon DeHaan, Esther Ricco*

In a continued effort to highlight areas within the university that have demonstrated outstanding leadership and support of inclusion and equity, this edition of Inclusion Extra! pays tribute to the work of the Finance and Administration Division. In the fall of 2011, the Finance and Administration Inclusion and Equity Committee was formed. The vision of this committee is to provide the Finance and Administration Division with an open and welcoming environment with the expectation that all dimensions of diversity are embraced, and equality is intentionally practiced.

The committee consists of eleven members representing each department within the Division. They focus on increasing intercultural competency and awareness throughout the Division and they strive to make inclusion and equity a priority. A website has been developed which includes diversity related readings and resources for programming and increasing intercultural awareness. The Division also hosts forums which include presentations around inclusion and equity.

At the next spring forum, the committee will recognize an individual who has exemplified the vision of the Finance and Administration Division. A survey will also be developed to assess the intercultural competency of the Division's staff and to assess how they can better promote inclusion and equity.

## DSR uses latest technology to assist students with visual impairments

For students with visual impairments, the staff members who work for Disability Support Resources (DSR) serve as advisors and technology trouble-shooters.

Kathleen VanderVeen, director of DSR, said there are 13 students with visual impairments who have registered with the office. Because blindness or visual impairments vary so greatly, VanderVeen said staff members must stay on top of the latest assistive technology.

“It's a priority in our office to always have up-to-date cutting-edge technology,” VanderVeen said. “To learn what's available, we attend conferences, subscribe to listservs and, most importantly, listen to our students' needs and try to find solutions.”

Kristen Kelling, a social work major from Coopersville, said she regularly meets with her DSR advisor, Shontaye Witcher, and Jeff Sykes, DSR assistive technology coordinator.

Kelling is blind due to problems with her optic nerve. “I have no vision, but the problem is with my optic nerve and not with my eyes directly,” Kelling said. “It is an under-development of the optic nerves, and the condition is called Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH).”

“I live on campus so I also use the van service in snowy conditions and testing accommodations when I need to take an exam,” she said.

Mary VanPopering is DSR's testing coordinator. She said students who use the office's testing facilities need to register via the online system a week before their test date.

“The online system puts in motion all of the logistics needed to accommodate the student based on the disability,” VanPopering said.



*Shontaye Witcher (left), associate director in Disability Support Resources, and Jeff Sykes (right), assistive technology coordinator, assist Kristen Kelling (center), GVSU student and DSR participant, with technology that helps her navigate the digital world.*

Some technology for students with visual impairments include Voice Dream Reader-Text to Speech app which allows the student to listen to Word documents, PDF documents, as well as eBooks downloaded from Bookshare and Project Gutenberg, two sites that share electronic books. A number of DSR students use this app on iPhones and iPads to listen to scanned textbook files prepared for them by DSR as an accommodation. The app uses high-quality voices, allows the student to enlarge text, and use a high contrast color scheme if desired. The text is highlighted as it is read, which aids in visual tracking. The app is also fully compatible with VoiceOver, the built-in screen reader on iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch, making it useful to persons who have visual impairments.



# Croatian food, memories shared at Faculty and Friends



Ivo Soljan

Last October, attendees of International Faculty and Friends had the pleasure of hearing Professor Ivo Soljan of the English Department speak about his native country, Croatia.

"It used to be known as Yugoslavia, which fell apart over the century. It's in the Mediterranean, close to Venice," he explained. "You try, number one, to locate it, so people know where it is. You try to say something about the history. The history is very rich, of course, like the history of any country. Especially during the Greek and Roman empires and the middle ages, there were great battles – it has a pretty bloody history, but it retains some wonderful remains from those times."

"Part of it was geographical, part was historical, and I went through a number of anecdotes about my growing up there."

Soljan treated attendees to several homemade Croatian dishes, including bakalar. "It's a stew with cod and potatoes," he said, explaining that "bakalar" is the name given to cod in that region. "You boil the potatoes and boil the cod, then add olive oil, chopped

garlic and parsley. They call it the holy trinity, that combination, because it goes in many foods. You mix it together – it's very tasty. Bakalar goes beautifully with red wine. No special rules like 'white wine with fish.' In that part of the world, red wine with everything!"

Dinner also included cakes or wafers from Croatia, and relishes such as ajvar, made with baked peppers and eggplants. Soljan described it as "red in color and very delicious."

Soljan's personal story only begins with Croatia. His family moved to Bosnia when he was young, where he lived for about 30 years before moving to the United States to join GVSU in 1991.

Still, he remains enthusiastic about his country of origin.

"Summertime is wonderful," he says.

"When you have time, go there and enjoy yourself!"



## Latino Student Initiative to bolster community outreach

The Latino Student Initiative is an effort headed by Dr. Maria Cimitile to evaluate Grand Valley State University's outreach to the Latino/Hispanic portion of our community in the tri-county area (Kent, Ottawa and Muskegon), and determine ways to improve this service.

The Initiative began when Dr. Cimitile took note of our community's changing demographics and national trends towards Latino outreach. "It's an old Grand Valley tradition that when you see a need, you try to fill it," she says. "And for me this is a social justice issue that's very important." A group was formed including Jeanne Arnold, vice president for Inclusion and Equity, and Connie Dang, director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, with Dr. Cimitile chairing the committee. "We gathered an enormous amount of information," says Dr. Cimitile, including demographics for the general population as well as the GVSU student body.

While GVSU is ranked number four in the state for Latino student representation, with 3.7% of its students self-identifying as Latino or Hispanic, this number is not yet reflective of the Hispanic demographic in our community. Dr. Cimitile says, "Even though we're in the top quartile of serving the Latino student body, it's still very low, and we want to do more to make sure that we're meeting people's needs in our community."

Three factors were key in recognizing the need for outreach: one, the huge population growth in the young Latino demographic – more than any other demographic group in the community; two, the low average level of education attainment in that group (meaning the rate of graduation from high school or college); and three, the average income, which is closely associated with education attainment.

While the Initiative is a new effort, Dr. Cimitile is also quick to point out that GVSU has already been very active in reaching out to the Latino community, citing the Admissions Office and the Office of Multicultural Affairs in particular, as well as individual faculty members. Thus, the Initiative aims to add to those efforts and better communicate those efforts to the community. "We need to be more intentional and communicate what we're doing," says Dr. Cimitile. Towards this end, a new website will be launched next year featuring all the opportunities available to the Latino community. In addition, "we are translating our Admissions website into Spanish. We also have some financial literacy publications that are in Spanish and English. That's primarily for the families. Our students are bilingual, but sometimes their families are not. It's important that they can have access to information about Grand Valley."

The Latino Student Initiative will also form an advisory board of people from our community. Dr. Cimitile explains, "We really want to hear from people in our community – what they need, and how we can better serve them. We're also doing a focus group with students to find out what we're doing well and what we can be doing better. I think it's important to listen to your constituents."

Other ideas that may be pursued are forming a mentoring program with faculty, as well as providing support via student mentorship, to promote academic success for Latino students as well as provide a social environment where they can thrive.

"The other thing that we're hoping to do is to create more funding opportunities for our students, and that will take the most time to put into place," says Dr. Cimitile. She expects a two-year timetable of great strides, at which point efforts will turn to sustaining the progress made.

# Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration

In late January and throughout February, GVSU celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage. While the officially designated awareness month is in May, most college campuses celebrate in February to coincide with the Lunar New Year. This also affords far more students the opportunity to participate as classes are generally over in May.

Connie Dang, director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, leads the planning of events. “My hope is to connect the classroom learning with the extracurricular activities,” she said. “When celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage, it’s important to highlight the diverse ethnic communities within this group. It is equally important to recognize the accomplishments and contributions as well as raising awareness of the challenges and struggles.”

Dang said that she also works to tie events to current issues on campus. “For example, this year the conversation around GVSU is about internationalization – it has been bubbling across the campus community. Therefore, I invited Professor Kin Ma, who travelled in June to Korea and Taiwan to speak at one of the events. Not all students can travel overseas and have that international experience, so we want to bring that international experience to them.”

Events this year included a celebration of the Asian New Year, a discussion of strategies for learning Chinese, presentation on Asian stereotyping in the media, and an event exploring the experience and phenomenon of children being adopted in the United States from Asia.

While issues and challenges are discussed, Dang said her goal is to celebrate each culture. “In general, what we try to do – and this holds true with the other celebrations as well, whether it’s Hispanic, Native American, African American or Asian American – is raise awareness, and recognize the contributions and the accomplishments of those communities.”



*Delta Phi Lambda fan dance, with Kelly Nguyen, Linda Teng and Cristina ‘Amira’ Cabrera at the Kirkhof Center.*

## Does your event conflict with a religious holiday?

In an effort to continue to make Grand Valley more inclusive, the university has implemented a Religious Inclusion Policy. This policy recognizes that the GVSU community observes traditions from a variety of religions. The following language is taken from a section of the policy which talks about scheduling campus events:

“When scheduling university events and activities, such as Family Weekend, Commencement, Convocation, and university sponsored conferences, planners should consult the list of religious holidays on the Inclusion and Equity website before selecting the date and time to ensure inclusiveness.”

Each year, significant campus events are scheduled that conflict with religious holidays. These scheduling conflicts foster misunderstanding and exclude members of the GVSU community. Consequently, although GVSU is a public institution and does not officially observe any religious holidays, we ask planners to review the Religious Interfaith Calendar on the Affirmative Action website before scheduling an event in order to avoid scheduling conflicts. Each holiday listed is linked to information about its significance. If we have missed a holiday on this calendar, please contact Krystal Vanden Bosch at [vandkrys@gvsu.edu](mailto:vandkrys@gvsu.edu).

# GVSU in holding pattern pending Supreme Court’s review of Affirmative Action

Grand Valley is currently taking a “wait to see” approach as courts are deciding issues concerning the future of Affirmative Action in higher education. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned Proposal 2, the ballot initiative that amended the Michigan State Constitution prohibiting methods of Affirmative Action that utilize “preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin and ethnicity.” Bill Schuette, Michigan’s Attorney General, has appealed the Sixth Circuit Court’s decision to the United States Supreme Court and the Court has agreed to hear the case. Schuette has asked for the

Court to delay the ruling overturning Proposal 2, pending the Supreme Court’s review.

In October 2012, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments on whether the University of Texas’ consideration of race in its admissions decisions is constitutional. The Supreme Court’s decision is expected to be announced in June of this year. Until there is finality in these two cases, GVSU will continue to operate under the requirements of Michigan’s Constitution, as amended by Proposal 2.

## Tim Wise visits GVSU



Tim Wise

Tim Wise, an anti-racist author and educator, presented, "Beyond Diversity: Challenging Racism in an Age of Backlash," to a large audience in the Grand River Room on January 31. Wise's presentation was a provocative analysis of diversity efforts occurring on college campuses and in corporate America. Wise

believes that most diversity trainings that are intended to promote tolerance fail miserably because they do not address the fundamental structures of racism and inequality.

Wise noted that colleges and universities throughout the higher education landscape must move from the current diversity framework paradigm to equity and advocacy. He stated that the current diversity framework within institutions of higher learning demonstrates a need for diversity. However, in his opinion, most colleges and universities "celebrate diversity" but have yet to establish institutional change.

Wise explained that the infrastructure, climate and life experiences of students, faculty and staff differ, in part because racism still exists. He challenged students, faculty and staff to explore the systems of inequality and to work towards building a racism-free environment.

## Welcome new employee Adriel Hilton

Adriel Hilton brings experience in corporate and higher education diversity to his new role as assistant vice president for Inclusion Initiatives.

Reporting to Vice President Jeanne Arnold, Hilton will be responsible for providing resources and support to enhance Grand Valley's inclusion efforts as related to the strategic plan.



Adriel Hilton

"This position involves a lot of pipeline issues," Hilton said. "It relates to students of color persistence and recruitment, and recruitment and retention for faculty and staff members of color."

Most recently, Hilton worked at Upper Iowa University, serving as executive assistant to the president, chief diversity officer and assistant secretary to the board of trustees.

Hilton earned a doctorate from Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. While there, he served as a public policy fellow and worked for the Greater Baltimore Committee on a number of projects including writing scripts for a public affairs cable television program, marketing and recruiting members, and preparing legislative briefs.

Hilton earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Morehouse College and a master's degree in social science from Florida A&M University.

In his free time, Hilton enjoys watching movies, attending cultural events and playing the alto saxophone.

## Inclusion Advocates and Champions focus on recruiting veterans

As a federal contractor, GVSU is obligated under the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRRA) to take affirmative action to employ and promote specified categories of veterans. Beyond its legal obligations, GVSU values the contributions that veterans provide as faculty and staff members.

Accordingly, the fall Semi-Annual Inclusion Advocate and Champion meeting was dedicated to discussing ways to recruit veterans for employment. Presenters were Brandi McBride, executive assistant/project manager, for Veteran Employment for Talent 2025, Paul Ryan, state chair of the Michigan Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and Steven Lipnicki, assistant dean of students, who represents the GVSU Veterans Network.

The presenters identified the benefits that veterans can offer employers, including strong leadership skills, working as team players, and being mission focused.

Participants were advised that VEVRAA requires all job postings to include a veterans recruiting source. These sources may be found under the Inclusive Recruitment Resources page on the Affirmative Action website.

## Lavender Graduation

The annual Lavender Graduation was held on Wednesday, April 17 in the Pere Marquette Room of the Kirkhof Center. Sixteen students

were recognized for their leadership, success, and achievements during their college experience. Elizabeth Rose Colletti Liguigli, Class of 2013, gave the keynote address. Lavender Graduation is a cultural celebration that recognizes LGBTQIA students' contributions to the university and acknowledges their achievements during their time here at Grand Valley.

