

Kutsche Chronicle

The Kutsche Office of Local History
Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies
Grand Valley State University

Fall 2024

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Upcoming Events

January 18th, 2025

History Detectives Grand Rapids

March 19th, 2025

16th Annual Local History
Roundtable

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Photograph of Market Avenue NW with the Eagle Hotel pictured, circa 1870

Community Galleries: Transportations Innovations Collection, Grand Rapids Public Museum Collection

Roundtable Recap



Thank you to everyone who helped make the 14th Annual Local History Roundtable a success!

Congratulations to our 2024 Gordon Olson Award recipient, Sophia Ward Brewer. Through a wealth of projects and positions, Brewer has committed decades to exploring and sharing the marginalized stories of Grand Rapids Black history and women's history, perfectly aligning with the Kutsche Office's mission of exploring the history of diverse communities in West Michigan. Other speakers that donated their time and talents for this year's Roundtable included Kaya DeerInWater, Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, Camren Stott, Jennifer Tompkins, Eric Gollannek, Jeff Smith, Andrew Schlewitz, and Jacey Adams. Thanks to all!



If you want to review any of the 2024 Roundtable's talks and presentations, full recordings are available on our [YouTube channel](https://www.gvsu.edu/kutsche/youtuberoundtables).

<https://www.gvsu.edu/kutsche/youtuberoundtables>



Photographs courtesy Dreams by Bella Photography

Director's Note

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Year!

As we embark on a new year, I want to begin by expressing my thanks for your support over the past one. The research, stories and efforts of all those who have helped to make our local history more inclusive are critical to the office's success. Leading the Kutsche Office of Local History for the past three years has allowed me to connect with so many people who share in our mission to "give voice to diverse communities through history." More details on how we are pursuing our mission can be found in these pages!

New Kutsche Office Coordinator

Ryan Moore became the Kutsche Office Coordinator in June 2024. He splits his time between the Kutsche Office of Local History and the Area & Global Studies cluster within the School of Interdisciplinary Studies. Ryan holds a BS degree in Secondary Education in Social Studies from Northern Michigan University in Marquette. New to Grand Rapids, Ryan enjoys going on hikes, reading about history and politics, playing video games, and playing with his cats, Cooper and Remmey.



Kutsche Office Director
Nora Salas



Kutsche Office Coordinator
Ryan Moore

Community Collaboration Grant Continues

Dr. Leanne Kang is continuing with her Community Collaboration Grant project that was awarded Winter 2024, titled “Grand Rapids Public Schools Uncovered: Oral Histories as Podcasts.”

This fall, Dr. Kang will continue working with the Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archives (GRAAMA), and the Grand Rapids People’s History Project to record and share interviews from Grand Rapids Public School staff, faculty, and students, from 1968 to the present. GRAAMA will also be collaborating with Dr. Kang to host a community event in which podcast guests will be invited to meet and further share their stories with each other and with the public. The Kutsche Office of Local History will be co-sponsoring the event. [A few of these podcasts are currently available to stream online.](#)

<https://www.gvsu.edu/kutsche/uncoveredpodcasts>

The Community Collaboration Grant requires faculty to work with a student to give them first-hand historical research experience. Bren Frick, a GVSU senior majoring in Education for Younger Children, has worked closely with Dr. Kang by interviewing former students, staff, and faculty from Grand Rapids Public Schools. When asked about her experience while working on the project, Frick stated: “In this project, I really enjoyed hearing from people whose stories have not always been made main-stream. I really enjoyed hunting for information that was not easily accessible, and being able to contribute to a project that is community oriented. It makes me feel proud to have worked on a project that will have an impact on the Grand Rapids community as a whole.”



Dr. Leanne Kang



GVSU Senior

Bren Frick



Now Accepting 2024-2025 CCG

Applicants

The Community Collaboration Grant program is on going and will awarded twice during the 2024-2025 academic year. The deadlines for applying are October 25th, 2024, and March 14th, 2025. October 2024 applicants are eligible to begin disbursement in January 2025; March 2025 applicants can begin in either May or September 2025. Grantees have one calendar year from the beginning of their disbursement to utilize all funds. [If you are interested in applying, please click here to see instructions on how to apply.](#)



“Growing Community Project”, 2016

History Detectives: January 18th, 2025

Once again, we are happy to be a co-sponsor of History Detectives at the Grand Rapids Public Library. History Detectives is an award-winning, day-long event that gives a stage to local historians. Sponsored by local history organizations, six speakers will present to a full house on Grand Rapids history; topics will include African-American history, sports history, women's history, local politics and the Grand River. Now in its sixteenth year, History Detectives continues to offer up-to-date history from independent researchers and academic historians. More details soon at:

<https://historydetectivesgr.org/>



2024 History Detectives

Nora Salas and Hannah McBride

Around the Community

Grand Rapids Champions Women's Rights

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum is partnering with the Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council and the League of Women Voters to host the program "Grand Rapids Champions Women's Rights: LWV, Betty Ford, and the ERA" on Thursday, October 17th, at 6:30pm. Dr. Liette Gidlow of Wayne State University has been invited to speak about the development of the League of Women Voters in Grand Rapids and First Lady Betty Ford's historic membership during the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment. Dr. Gidlow specializes in researching women's suffrage and the 19th Amendment, voting rights and voter turnout, and African American Electoral politics. **Kutsche office supporters may remember when our Director, Nora Salas, and Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council member Ruth Stevens spoke about the Equal Rights Amendment at the [2023 History Detectives in Grand Rapids](#).** We encourage anyone interested topics such as the ERA and Grand Rapids' role in the struggle for political equality after women's suffrage to attend the event on October 17th. Register here on [their website](#).



Grassroots Partnerships with Dr. Delia Fernandez-Jones

Latin Americans United for Progress will be partnering with the Holland Museum to host “Grassroots Partnerships: Public History Strategies for Historians and Institutions” on October 10th, 7-8:30pm. The featured speaker will be Dr. Delia Fernandez-Jones, **former Kutsche Office Advisory Council member and GVSU alumna**. She has been invited to discuss methods of developing community engaged partnerships with grassroots collaborators, such as the Michigan Historical Marker Program. During this event, Dr. Fernandez-Jones seeks to help participants understand the opportunities and challenges of establishing historical markers in Holland, review goals in creating and sustaining public history projects, create best practices, reflect on what learning needs to be done before and during the project, find potential collaborators, and envision paths forward.

At this event there will be a brief update on the [Latinx Historical Marker Project](#). This project is a collaboration between the Kutsche Office, Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities (GAAH), the Latino Community Coalition (LCC) and Dr. Delia Fernandez-Jones.

The event will be hosted at the Latin Americans United for Progress headquarters, located at 430 W. 17th Street, Suite 31, Holland, Michigan. The program is free, and while registration is not required, it is encouraged. If you are passionate about creating or assisting with public history projects in your community, this event is for you! Click here to register online at [Grassroots Partnerships: Public History Strategies for Historians and Institutions Registration](#).

<https://www.gvsu.edu/kutsche/grassroots>



Dr. Delia Fernandez-Jones



Latinx Historical Marker Project Event.
November, 2023

Save the Date

16th Annual
Local History Roundtable



March 19th, 2025



Grand Rapids, Michigan on September 17th, 1969, Mexican Independence Day Parade

Teacher Galleries: 2024-2025 Hispanic Heritage Month

Grand Rapids Public Museum Collection