



VOLUME 14 ISSUE 8 • FEBRUARY 2024

APSS NEWSLETTER

THE LATEST NEWS & UPDATES FROM GVSU'S APSS
UNION & ITS MEMBERS

photo by Bonnie Jaracz

ISSUE FEATURES

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MEMBER NEWS

BY DAVID MADISON

WGVU, MAINTENANCE ENGINEER

Retiring Feb.2, 2024; 35 years at GV

I grew up on a small farm in Northern Kent County. Even though I left home for college and never returned to live at the farm, the farm boy in me has never left. I have always enjoyed working in the yard and planting a garden and having some house plants. About 7 years ago, I attended the orchid show at Meijer Gardens. Orchids have always fascinated me, so I ended up purchasing my first orchid, an Oncidium Twinkle and joining the Grand Valley Orchid Society. Unfortunately, as with many hobbies, it becomes addicting to see different species of orchids and adding them to your collection. When you are a novice, you don't realize that some of these orchids get really big and that your growing space quickly fills up.

During the pandemic, I had 120 orchids growing in windowsills and in a light stand. I also learned that orchids could come with pests and diseases and I ended up losing part of my collection. Now that I am a bit more experienced, I know which orchids grow in my conditions and am trying to keep fewer but higher quality plants. The orchids you see in the grocery store are Phalaenopsis orchids and they are one of the easiest to grow as long as you don't overwater them and keep them out of direct sunlight. The orchids I like to grow are Paphiopedilum orchids otherwise known as slipper orchids.

I was fortunate to have one of my orchids awarded at the Ann Arbor orchid show at the U of M last fall.

Orchids can be tricky to grow but are very rewarding when they bloom. You can check out the American Orchid Society website to learn more about orchids and how to grow them or to join a local orchid society.





UNION NEWS



APSS CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS - 12.3.3 USAGE OF SALARY CONTINUATION

BY SHAWN EVANS, BARGAINING COM. CHAIR

With the changing seasons and winter weather upon us, PSS are encouraged to review the [Cancellation/Closure/Remote policy \(SLT 6.3\)](#). As “it is not anticipated the university would close for weather related events,” I will encourage PSS to also review 12.3.3 F of our [contractual agreement](#).

This clause affords each eligible staff member up to 16 hours of salary continuation per calendar year when severe weather creates a hardship preventing the staff member from working. Although this contractual language was designed to encompass a variety of severe weather hardships, such as, flooding, high winds, thunderstorms, and, of course, snow accumulation, usage of this benefit requires use the Workday time entry code SNOW.

With any usage of salary continuation, I would encourage clear and advance dialogue with your supervisor as this person will be responsible for approving your time card. Remote work may be a feasible option for both you and your supervisor – even if GVSU has neither closed, nor switched to remote work, in response to severe weather. If remote work is not an option in these situations, please know that you may use up to 16 hours of salary continuation per calendar year with the SNOW code in Workday.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this (or any) contractual clause.

REMINDER: PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF (PSS) SCHOLARSHIP

BY APSS UNION

The purpose of this scholarship is to assist Professional Support Staff (PSS) employee group children and grandchildren in the pursuit of an undergraduate college degree at Grand Valley State University.

The applicant must be a child or grandchild of an employee in the current Professional Support Staff (PSS) employee group. This PSS employee may either be currently working and has completed a minimum of three continuous years by the application deadline, or a PSS employee who has retired from GVSU and is currently receiving GVSU retirement benefits.

The applicant must be admitted as an undergraduate degree-seeking student to GVSU and plan to enroll as a full time student for both fall and winter semesters.

Renewal Criteria: To receive the scholarship the parent or grandparent of the scholarship recipient must continue to be a member/retiree of the PSS employee group. Recipients must reapply.

Direct your child or grandchild to login to [myScholarships](#) and search **Professional Support Staff (PSS) Scholarship** to apply.

Deadline to apply is **March 1, 2024**.

Scholarship amount varies depending on the number of applicants.



UNION NEWS

APSS ATTENDS NEW EMPLOYEE RESOURCE FAIR

BY MEGAN KOEMAN-EDING, APSS COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On January 19, HR hosted a New Employee Orientation which included a Resource Fair for all new employees hired since the start of fall, 2023. Our Union staffed a table at the Resource Fair as a way to introduce ourselves to new PSS. We will continue to host a table at each New Employee Orientation and Resource Fair, with the next one coming up in the spring/summer.



OPENING ON APSS BARGAINING COMMITTEE

BY SHAWN EVANS, BARGAINING COM. CHAIR

As you may have heard, one of our APSS Bargaining Team members, DeMarcus Turnbough, has recently accepted an EAP position within Information Technology. I was able to connect with DeMarcus as he was considering departure from the bargaining unit and I encouraged him to do what is best professionally for him and his family. I am saddened that we will not have DeMarcus on our team as we approach Bargaining 2025. We have a great deal of work in front of us, this year and next, and although DeMarcus was new to our bargaining team, I was already impressed with his understanding of this work, the perspective that he provided to our conversations, and his willingness to dive into this work on behalf of the APSS.

Please let me know if you are interested in consideration for the vacancy on the Bargaining Team. There is a brief application/interview process which will need to be completed for consideration by the APSS Executive Board prior to appointment.

More information about the selection process can be found [here](#) – Section 6.03: Bargaining Committee.

The APSS Bargaining Team will be working on designing a pulse survey to inform our initial assessment of potential interests from your experiences, insights, and feedback. This will be made available in fall 2024, and I will speak to this and the team's process of analysis and preparation for bargaining at the 2024 APSS Fall Luncheon. Please provide feedback as you are comfortable in that survey. You are also always welcome to provide direct feedback to the APSS Bargaining Team through apssbargaining@gmail.com, or through a direct email to any Bargaining Team members.

On behalf of the APSS Bargaining Team,
sme



WORKSHOPS

WORKDAY TRAININGS CONTINUE!

PRESENTED BY THE WORKDAY TEAM

Trainings abound for Workday and are listed in [Sprout!](#) Many of the trainings now offer a self-paced option as well if that better fits your schedule. Lots of information is available on Sprout as well as the [Workday Training page](#).

THE POWER OF PRONOUNS: WHY THE WORDS WE USE ARE IMPORTANT

PRESENTED BY INCLUSION & EQUITY

The Power of Pronouns: Why the words we use are Important is a two hour oral presentation that utilizes a combination of evidence-based practice and research to level set, explore, and intervene to build affirming environments. Content is directly influenced by research to support disparity and inequity discussions as well as evidence-based tools to address them. Case studies and personal stories are leveraged to provide background to the experience of being part of the LGBTQ+ community. Current issues are also discussed as it relates to legislation. Specific tools for the classroom and beyond are also explored to improve belonging and support LGBTQ+ students. The delivery method includes the utilization of slides, personal stories, videos, and music to guide the learner's journey.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the words we use, including how they influence health, ways to seek pronouns, and how to use them to make affirming spaces.
- Recognize minority stress and its influence on both mental and physical health disparities and outcomes.
- Learn tools to build affirming environments.
- Acknowledge and describe the impact language has.

Presenters:

- Dr. Jay Knight (They/Them/Theirs)
- Jennie Knight (She/Her/Hers)

Thursday, February 1 · 1:00PM - 3:00PM · KC 2270



WORKSHOPS

INTERFAITH DIMENSIONS OF CAMPUS INCLUSION

PRESENTED BY KAUFMAN INTERFAITH INSTITUTE

Two trends have significantly increased America's religious diversity in recent decades. The first is increased immigration by religious minorities such as Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. The second, is widespread disaffiliation from organized religion, especially among the Millennials and Gen Z. The trends are also evident on Grand Valley's Campus. As we seek to advance an inclusive campus climate, the religious, secular, and spiritual dimensions of faculty, staff, and students must be taken into consideration. This session will present a framework for interfaith considerations on campus, the relationship between worldview, culture, and other aspects of student identity, and resources for ensuring positive and inclusive spaces in your spheres of influence.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a greater understanding of Interfaith and Pluralism on campus.
- Better understand how religious / secular / spiritual identity impacts student experiences
- Gain knowledge of GV policies and resources for creating a healthy multi-faith campus environment.
-

Presenters:

- Zahabia Ahmed-USmani (She/Her/Hers)
- Liz English (She/Her/Hers)

Wednesday, February 7 · 11:00AM - 12:00PM
· Virtual

ANIT-RACISM WHITE CONSCIOUSNESS COHORT

PRESENTED BY INCLUSION & EQUITY

This is a 5-session learning cohort for white identifying faculty and staff at GVSU who are interested in learning about and developing anti-racist practices in their daily lives. Because the learning content is progressive from session to session, there is an expectation that participants will be able to attend every session.

Systems of oppression and white privilege are often invisible to those that benefit from them. For this reason, it is especially important for those that identify as white to intentionally engage in anti-white supremacy work to better identify their own behaviors, to understand the systems at play, and to learn how to deepen personal and institutional anti-racism commitments.

Learning Outcomes:

- Deepen our self-reflective anti-racist practices.
- Understand white identity development.
- Examine how white supremacy culture, white privilege, and intersectionality impact one's relationship to social structures.
- Incorporate daily practice strategies to analyze and dismantle racially oppressive practices and systems.
- Integrate knowledge and practice in our understanding of agency to show up as learners, allies, and accomplices.

Presenters:

- Jon Jeffries (He/Him/His)
- MJ Creutz (She/Her/Hers)

All five dates listed in [Sprout](#).



WORKSHOPS

LGBTQ FOUNDATIONS, LEVEL IV: MAKE NOISE

PRESENTED BY LGBT RESOURCE CENTER

In the "Make NOISE" session, participants will focus on developing strategic action plans to integrate LGBTQIA+ inclusion into their leadership practices. Through interactive activities and case studies, attendees will learn how to create comprehensive organizational policies, foster a culture of open communication, and implement initiatives that champion diversity and acceptance. By equipping leaders with actionable strategies, this session empowers them to drive transformative change, elevate inclusivity as a core value, and ensure that LGBTQIA+ individuals are safe, valued, respected, and empowered within their organizations.

Learning Outcomes

- Use N.O.I.S.E as a planning analysis tool to determine what's working within institutionalized systems and how things can be improved.
- Foster Allyship and Advocacy: Attendees will acquire the skills to actively champion LGBTQIA+ rights, serve as allies, and advocate for change within their professional spheres, fostering a more supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ individuals.
- Lead Inclusively: Through case studies and interactive exercises, participants will cultivate leadership strategies that celebrate diversity, address bias, and create an environment where all team members are empowered to bring their authentic selves to the workplace.

- Promote Education and Awareness: By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to initiate educational initiatives and awareness campaigns about LGBTQIA+ issues, driving meaningful change and fostering a culture of empathy and understanding.
- Measure Progress and Impact: Attendees will learn how to measure the impact of their inclusive leadership efforts, using qualitative and quantitative methods to track changes in organizational culture, employee engagement, and overall LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Presenter:

DL McKinney, (they/them)

Friday, February 16 · 9:30AM - 1:00PM · KC 2266





WORKSHOPS

UNDERSTANDING THE TITLE IX AND CIVIL RIGHTS PROCESS AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESENTED BY INCLUSION & EQUITY

In the “Understanding the Title IX and Civil Rights process” session, participants will be given an overview of the Title IX and Civil Rights processes here at GVSU. Attendees will gain an understanding of what types of issues our office handles, what happens once a report is made and what options they have for resolution. We will explore the reporting, response and resolution process through case studies, guided discussions and multimedia presentations. This session is aimed to address misconceptions about the Title IX and Civil Rights process and to equip attendees with an understanding of what they can expect once a report is filed with our office.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the types of incidents that the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX handles
- Understand what happens once a report is made and the agency of the impacted party
- Understand options for formal and informal resolution of a complaint

Presenters:

- Stacy Piasecki (She/Her/Hers)
- MJ Creutz (She/Her/Hers)

Wednesday, February 14 · 12:00PM - 1:30PM
· KC 2270

WHAT ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) EXCLUSION REVEALS

PRESENTED BY INCLUSION & EQUITY

The purpose of this session is to consider what happens when AAPI students (and faculty) are missing from diversity initiatives and the curriculum in public schools and higher education. To consider the issue, we will turn to a brief history lesson on the Chinese Exclusion Act and Tape v. Hurley, a lawsuit filed by a Chinese American family in 1885 - histories that are in of themselves excluded and missing in the curriculum and unknown by most Americans ...The presenters will argue that distorted perceptions of AAPI folks is one outcome of not knowing this history.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand that the exclusion of BIPOC histories in formal and informal learning spaces has led to misperceptions across multiple spaces

Presenters:

- Leanne King
- Mei Mah

Thursday, February 22 · 10:30AM - 12:00PM · Virtual



WORKSHOPS

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERRUPTING IMPLICIT BIAS 101

PRESENTED BY INCLUSION & EQUITY

LUNCH & LEARN: Implicit Bias refers to the beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and emotions that impact our behaviors, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. This workshop is designed to walk alongside participants to understand the cognitive, cultural and socio-emotional considerations related to implicit biases and how it influences our decision-making and interactions. Participants will learn tools, strategies, and systems to address, interrupt and mitigate harmful biases in ways that foster personal growth and organizational inclusion.

Learning Outcomes:

- Define implicit/unconscious bias and describe how it informs individual, organizational and systemic actions and impact
- Utilize tools to help identify personal and organizational biases
- Develop strategic frameworks to counteract harmful and/or unhelpful biases.
-

Presenters:

- Dr. Alisha Davis (She/Her/Hers)
- Callie Youngman (She/Her/Hers)

Friday, February 23 · 11:00AM - 1:00PM · Virtual

DON'T FORGET TO
CHECK [SPROUT](#)
THROUGHOUT THE
MONTH FOR
ADDITIONAL
CLASSES THAT
MAY BE ADDED
AFTER THE
PUBLICATION OF
THIS NEWSLETTER.



BENEFITS & WELLNESS

MEET WITH GARY, YOUR WORK LIFE CONSULTANT

BY HUMAN RESOURCES

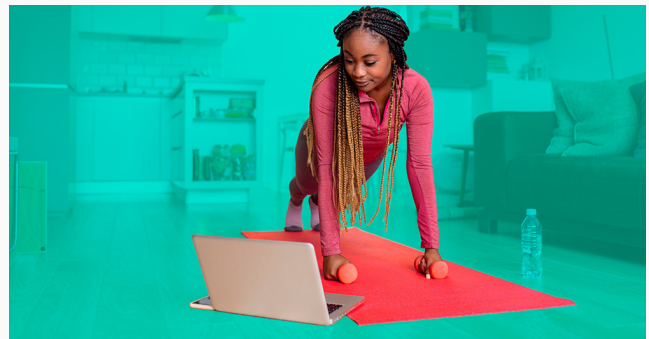
Experiencing stress or conflict in the workplace, or just feeling down due to the lack of sun? Gary Atkins is available to meet with all faculty and staff, virtually or in-person, to discuss personal or professional issues impacting well-being. The Work Life Consultant role is powered by [Encompass](#), GVSU's employee assistance program, and is completely confidential. Whether it's work-life balance issues, childcare troubles or more, Gary can listen and help provide tools and resources for whatever you may be experiencing. [Learn more about Gary and schedule an appointment.](#)



GET MOVING WITH WELLBEATS

BY HUMAN RESOURCES

According to the American Heart Association, only about one in five adults get enough exercise to maintain good health. If you need help fitting heart-pumping exercise into your day, you're not alone—and Wellbeats can help! Wellbeats offers on-demand fitness classes for all ages, abilities, and interests, available to all GVSU faculty and staff. Explore a variety of workouts including running and walking, HIIT, cycling, kickboxing, and yoga, as well as mindfulness and nutrition classes to protect and strengthen your heart. Remember: any movement is better than none. Whether you only have a few minutes or an hour, take steps to a healthier heart today with [Wellbeats](#).



**Your Heart
Deserves
the Best**

◆ **Wellbeats**
Wellness



CAMPUS NEWS

FINANCIAL SENSE WEBINARS BY ALUMNI RELATIONS

Alumni Relations is hosting a webinar series in February called [Financial Sense](#). Anyone is welcome to participate, not just alums.

More info and RSVP link at gvsu.edu/alumni/fs.

Sessions will be hosted on Wednesdays from 12:00 - 12:50 p.m. ET. on Zoom:

- 2/7: Financial Basics 101
- 2/14: Six Barriers to Investment Success
- 2/21: College Planning Essentials
- 2/28: Learning from the Lessons of Time

Melissa Stewart '09, will host these sessions. Melissa is the founder and a financial advisor at [Clear Vista Advisors](#).



ADMISSIONS EVENTS IN FEBRUARY BY ADMISSIONS & RECRUITMENT

February 3 and 10: Signature Saturday (Honors/Admissions event)

February 16 and 23: Admitted Student Days (Invite only, intended for admitted GVSU students!)

MOM NETWORK

BY HR – NETWORK COMMUNITIES

The GVSU Mom Network is a warm and inclusive community for moms from all walks of life. Our monthly gatherings provide a precious opportunity for you to take off your professional hat and connect with other moms who understand the unique joys and challenges of balancing work and family life. We can't wait to meet you and embark on this wonderful journey of motherhood together. Learn more about the [Mom Network](#) and visit [Sprout](#) to register.

Wednesday, February 14 · 12:00PM - 1:00PM · Pew Campus, room TBD

SANDWICH GENERATION NETWORK

BY HR – NETWORK COMMUNITIES

The "sandwich generation" can be defined as a generation of caregivers who are responsible for caring for multiple generations, often their own children and aging parents. If you are a part of this generation, you're not alone. Meet with the Sandwich Generation Network to connect with fellow GVSU faculty and staff members about your unique experiences and share resources. Visit [Sprout](#) to register.

Thursday, February 15 · 12:00PM - 1:00PM · Virtual



CAMPUS NEWS

CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH SCREENINGS BY COUNSELING CENTER

In our continued efforts to support the health and safety of our campus community, the University Counseling Center will be hosting campus-wide mental health screenings this Winter semesters. We encourage you to mark your calendars and share this news with students via email or Blackboard, or in your classroom or workspace.

Details:

- Anyone who takes part in the screening will have a chance to meet with a counselor, on-the-spot, to discuss their results. These results are kept confidential.
- Free gifts, including lip balms, pens, and aromatherapy putty, will be provided to those who participate.
- If students are not on campus the days of the screenings, they can participate anytime by accessing the University Counseling Center's online screening tool or visiting the mental health screening kiosks in Kirkhof and DeVos.

Dates:

- Thursday, February 22, 2024
- Thursday, March 28, 2024

Locations:

- Allendale Campus
 - Kirkhof Main Lobby: 10:00am - 4:00pm
 - Campus Rec Center: 1:00pm - 5:00pm
- Pew Campus
 - Center for Health Science: 9:00am - 1:00pm
 - Seidman Center: 11:00am - 3:00pm

We hope that you will support our efforts toward a safe and healthy campus community by sharing this information widely. And thank you for your commitment to student mental health. Additional mental health services can be found on the [University Counseling Center](#) website, including [self-help resources](#) and our new peer-to-peer mental health support platform, [Togetherall](#).

If you are concerned about a student or are interested in supporting student mental health in the classroom, please visit our dedicated [faculty/staff](#) resource page.

Remember, mental health is just one aspect of student wellness. Additional information about the eight dimensions of wellness and the services available to students can be found on the [Student Wellness](#) website.

Anchor Up!

UNIVERSITY
COUNSELING CENTER
STUDENT AFFAIRS

MENTAL HEALTH



SCREENING DAY



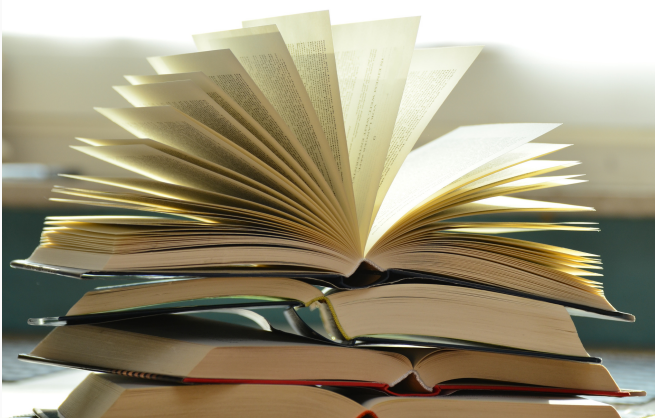
CAMPUS NEWS

THE BOOK IS ALWAYS BETTER BY HR – NETWORK COMMUNITIES

Are you tired of looking for something to stream? Are you bored with the same old computer games? Would like something different to do during your lunch hour? Are you interested in connecting with fellow Lakers? Join [The Book is Always Better](#) network community.

Every 6 weeks, the club will read and explore a contemporary novel. Read all of the book, if you are able, and come ready to share your thoughts and experiences with the story. A corresponding organization in Blackboard Ultra will be available to continue discussions, post chats from club meetings, and share resources and ideas. All books selected are available to purchase from Amazon or can be loaned from your local library.

February 28 Book: *Coleman Hill* by Kim Coleman Foote (300 pages)



Wednesday, February 28 · 12:00PM - 1:00PM · Virtual

UNRAVELING THE LAYERS: UNDERSTANDING QR CODE SECURITY BY IT SECURITY

QR codes, or Quick Response codes, have become an integral part of our daily lives, seamlessly connecting the physical and digital worlds. From contactless payments to accessing websites, QR codes provide a convenient and efficient way to transfer information. However, as their popularity grows, so does the need to address concerns surrounding QR code security.

Strengths of QR Code Security:

1. Data Encryption
2. Authentication and Authorization
3. Contactless Transactions

Vulnerabilities and Risks:

1. Malicious QR Codes
2. Data Tampering
3. Lack of Standardization

Best Practices for QR Code Security:

1. Verify Sources: Before scanning a QR code, ensure it comes from a trusted source. Avoid scanning codes from unknown or suspicious origins, especially in public spaces.
2. Use Secure Connections: When scanning QR codes that involve transactions or sensitive information, ensure you are using a secure and trusted internet connection to mitigate the risk of interception.
3. Regular Updates: Keep QR code-scanning applications and software up to date. Developers frequently release updates to address security vulnerabilities and enhance overall protection.



CAMPUS NEWS

LAKER AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

BY ANNA DAVIS, UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT

Looking to get more involved at GVSU but don't want to make a major time commitment? The Laker Ambassador Program may be for you! Laker Ambassadors encourage philanthropic support for GVSU by sharing opportunities to give back to the university via their personal social media channels. You may participate as much or as little as your schedule allows and there is no financial commitment. Sign up today to be an ambassador and help create community and opportunity at Grand Valley: www.gvsu.edu/giving/ambassador.





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BIRTHDAYS

2ND – KATIE HAYNES

18TH – DAWN NAGELKIRK

20TH – LINDSEY BURNS

24TH – ERICA BAKER-BRINGEDAHL

28TH – MEGAN KOEMAN-EDING

GVSU ANNIVERSARY

1ST – JORDAN SICKREY

19TH – TAMMY TOBAR

23RD – SHERRI HALL

26TH – SHYCEKA ARMSTRONG

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

14TH – RHONDA LEMIEUX (32 YRS)



SHARE PICTURES OF YOUR PETS FOR THE MARCH NEWSLETTER! EMAIL MEGAN BY 5PM ON THURSDY, FEBRUARY 22.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY. FOR SUBMISSION INFORMATION, CONTACT MEGAN KOEMAN-EDING AT EDINGME@GVSU.EDU.