

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 8 • FEBRUARY 2025

# APSS NEWSLETTER

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

photo by Chris Watson

## ISSUE FEATURES

### APSS IS ON FACEBOOK!

We hope this will be a fun space for active and retired APSS members to share and collaborate together...  
*more on page 2*

### ROGER THAT! CONFERENCE

This year's Roger That! conference will focus on ways space exploration and communication can intersect and will feature a keynote from a retired NASA astronaut...  
*more on page 3*

### CONTINUING TO CREATE: BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025

View a list of events to celebrate Black History Month at GVSU...  
*more on page 10*

### HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrations, self-care tips, and book recommendations! starting *on page 11*

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# UNION NEWS



## A MESSAGE FROM THE APSS BARGAINING TEAM

BY SHAWN EVANS, BARGAINING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Weekly APSS Bargaining Team meetings have been scheduled through May – we will add additional meetings/time as needed. We are looking closely at the existing contract and survey results. This will be my last newsletter update until we have a ratified contract, but please don't hesitate to contact me at [apssbargaining@gmail.com](mailto:apssbargaining@gmail.com) if you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns.

On behalf of your APSS Bargaining Team,

sme

**APSS is on Facebook!!!** We hope this will be a fun space for active and retired APSS members to share and collaborate together. For those of you who remember the Barter Board, we are hoping this can serve as a surrogate until the University creates something similar again.

You can find the group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/apssgvsu> or by searching GVSU Alliance of Professional Support Staff within Facebook. The group is private and will require approved membership. You will need to agree to the group rules and answer a few questions to be admitted.

This is not a mandatory requirement of being in the APSS Union. The board may use the platform to share information, but no information that is pertinent to all members will ever be shared only on Facebook.

Please reach out to Kelli Dykstra or Katie Haynes if you have any questions.





# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## ROGER THAT! CONFERENCE

This year's Roger That! conference will focus on ways space exploration and communication can intersect and will feature a keynote from a retired NASA astronaut who did three spacewalks focused on the International Space Station's Construction.

John Herrington, pictured below, will speak at GVSU and the Grand Rapids Public Museum in February. There will also be additional programming, including for K-12 students.

For more information and to register for the events, visit the [GVNext article](#).



## CONSCIOUS CONVERSATIONS

BY GVSU WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Join the Women's Commission for Conscious Conversation - *No Is a Complete Sentence: Invisible Work and Kinkeeping in the Workplace* on Wednesday, February 26, at 12PM via Zoom. Visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/wcommission/conscious-conversations-87.htm> for more information.

GVSU  
WOMEN'S  
COMMISSION

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# CONSCIOUS CONVERSATION

*No Is A Complete Sentence: Invisible Work  
and Kinkeeping in the Workplace*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 12PM  
ZOOM

VISIT [WWW.GVSU.EDU/WCOMMISSION](http://WWW.GVSU.EDU/WCOMMISSION)



# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS: POWER OUTAGES

BY GVPD

A power outage is **RARELY** an immediate hazard or emergency. There is no need to report an outage to GVSU. Only call 911 if there is an emergency. Please remain calm while GVSU enacts its power outage plan.

If class is in session, we encourage you to remain in your classroom unless there is an immediate need to evacuate. Instructors may ask that students remain in the classroom to see if power returns quickly. Instructors have full authority to utilize natural lighting to continue instruction if able or to cancel the remainder of the classroom period.

If there is a need to evacuate the building or you are in a location with no natural light, follow exit lighting and signs or use cell phone lights to carefully navigate out of the building or to a naturally lit area. Please remember that candles are not to be used in campus buildings.

Those who may need assistance in evacuating a building that has lost power can contact Student Accessibility Resources at 616-331-2490 or [access@gvsu.edu](mailto:access@gvsu.edu) for more information.

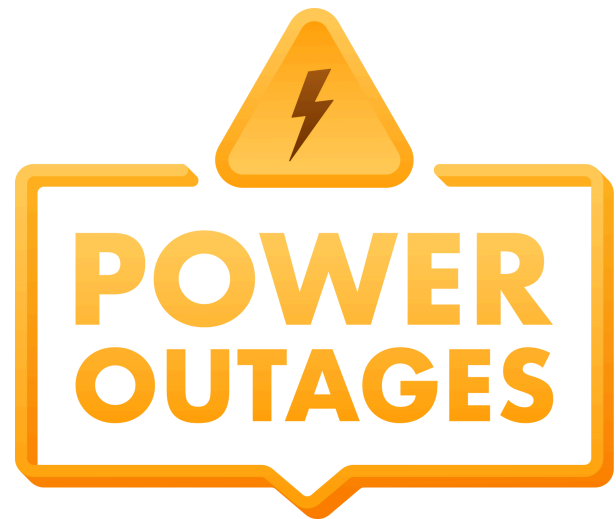
A long term power outage can impact the operational status of the University. If it is determined that because of severity or timing the University needs to delay or suspend operations, a GVSUAlert! will be sent out to the community.

### **Elevator entrapment and safety systems -**

While elevators may stop in the event of a power outage, the phones inside will still work, as they do not rely on a power supply. Backup systems will still allow fire detection and fire suppression devices, as well as security alarms, to function during a power outage.

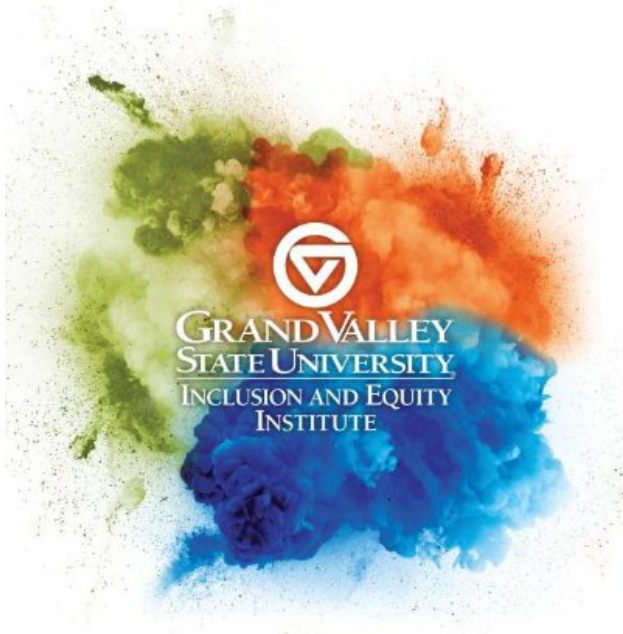
**Street/parking lot lighting** - Lighting fixtures that are on and around campus buildings, roads, pathways and parking lots will cease to function upon loss of power. In the event a traffic signal is out, all vehicles traveling in any direction must come to a complete stop before proceeding.

If you have questions about power outages, or suggestions about topics you'd like to see these emails address, please email the Grand Valley Department of Public Safety at [gvpd@gvsu.edu](mailto:gvpd@gvsu.edu).





# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS BY I&E INSTITUTE

Participants will learn what constitutional rights you hold, whether or not you are a citizen of the United States. The presenters will share when and how to exercise those rights and how to assist students, faculty, staff, and community members in doing the same.

**Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 9A-11A**  
**Kirkhof Center 2204 (Allendale Campus)**  
*Additional Dates & Times Available*

[More Information and Registration](#)

## PAY EQUITY BY I&E INSTITUTE

The gender pay gap is real, persistent, and harmful to women's financial well-being, and at the current rate, won't close until 2088. Come to understand the importance of Equal Pay Day. We will share some of the research being done to support good practices and policies that help put women on par with men, showing how pay equity is good for business. Learn about the policy that you can support to ensure equal pay for all women. And we'll share resources for how folks might be empowered to advocate for themselves whether that's in learning to negotiate for better pay or in supporting programs aimed at closing wage, STEM, and leadership gaps that indirectly impact pay equity.

**Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 12-1P**  
**Kirkhof Center 2266 (Allendale Campus)**

[More Information and Registration](#)

## INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ON LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY I&E INSTITUTE

This workshop will provide knowledge and insight into understanding the use and application of what a Land Acknowledgement really means. Topics covered will include Native American identity dynamics, tribal nation and tribal citizen sovereignty, understanding treaties between federal government and the tribal nations.

**Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 2-3:30P**  
**Kirkhof Center 2263(Allendale Campus)**

[More Information and Registration](#)

# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## MICROSOFT 365 *Webinars*

GVSU's eLearning department offers Microsoft-specific trainings to meet your workflow needs. Join our webinars to learn application-related skills and navigate the Microsoft 365 suite.



**January - June**



**Zoom**



**Steph Balaskas**  
IT Training Specialist

- **OUTLOOK**
- **BOOKINGS**
- **POWERPOINT**
- **TEAMS**
- **WINDOWS 11**
- **EXCEL**



For more information contact  
[balaskas@gvsu.edu](mailto:balaskas@gvsu.edu)

To register, visit  
[myworkday.com/gvsu/learning](https://myworkday.com/gvsu/learning)





# BENEFITS & WELLNESS

**CALLING ALL GALLUP CERTIFIED STRENGTHS® COACHES, FACILITATORS AND PRACTITIONERS!**  
BY HUMAN RESOURCES

To empower the GVSU community in using their Strengths each and every day, Human Resources is looking to create a robust network of Strengths leaders on campus that have engaged in Gallup Strengths certifications.

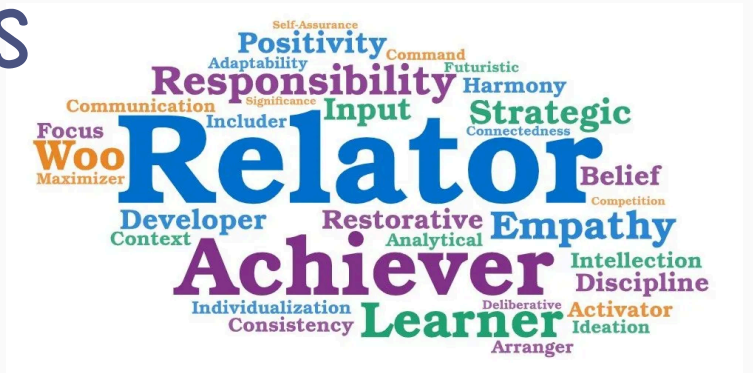
If you have received a Strengths certification and are interested in joining a GVSU Strengths Community of Practice, please contact Natalie Trent, [trentnat@gvsu.edu](mailto:trentnat@gvsu.edu). We are gathering interest now to begin bringing Strengths practitioners from around campus together in March. We look forward to meeting with our campus Strengths leaders in the near future!

**ENABLING PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS**  
BY HUMAN RESOURCES

**February 25, 3-4 p.m. (Virtual)**

Discover why conventional “best practice” meeting disciplines often fall short and how to transform meetings into dynamic, productive gatherings. This webinar explores the power of flexibility, shared objectives, and human-centered approaches to build trust and foster connection for productivity. Backed by real-world insights, you'll learn practical strategies to adapt and when it's relevant, to abandon conventional meeting advice to elevate your meetings to drive success. *Presenter: Professor Kee Meng Yeo, Seidman Management Department.* [Register for Enabling Productive Meetings.](#)

**AP Committee: Enabling Productive Meetings**



**CLIFTONSTRENGTHS: INTRODUCTORY SESSION FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS**  
BY HUMAN RESOURCES

**February 19, 1-2:30 p.m. (Kirkhof Center)**

Have you completed the CliftonStrengths assessment and are wondering what now? Join Human Resources for a hands-on, interactive session to explore and understand your personalized CliftonStrengths results. We'll navigate a variety of exercises to learn more about each of your top 5 Strengths, how these show up for you as an individual, and how you can begin to apply them proactively for your personal and professional development and growth.

### More Information and Registration

**\*\*Note:** Completion of the CliftonStrengths assessment is required for enrollment in this session. Please ensure you have completed that before registering, as this is needed to provide participants with personalized session materials.

The CliftonStrengths assessment was distributed via email invitation to all regular part and full-time faculty and staff at the beginning of June 2024. You may either complete the assessment by following the link in that email invite or logging into [Okta](#) and navigating to the Gallup portal. You will need to create a new account the first time you login by setting up security questions. If you need to have the email communication resent, please contact Talent Management at [hro@gvsu.edu](mailto:hro@gvsu.edu).



# CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS

## YOUR 2024 W-2 NOW AVAILABLE BY HUMAN RESOURCES

### View your electronic W-2 in Workday:

The electronic copy of your 2024 W-2 is now available in your Workday profile. Paper copies were mailed January 31. To learn how to view the electronic copy of your W-2, follow the Workday Help article:

[How to Access Year End Tax Documents \(W-2\).](#)

### Opting for "Electronic-Only" W-2s

The default setting for W-2s in Workday is both electronic and paper delivery. We encourage you to choose electronic-only delivery for faster access and to support GVSU's sustainability efforts.

To make this change, follow the instructions in the Help article. In Step 11, you will have the option to "Change Year-End Tax Documents Printing Elections," then opt to "Receive electronic copy of my Year-End Tax Documents."

### Benefits of Electronic-Only W-2s

- Avoid delays: Receive your W-2 sooner with electronic delivery. Electronic availability for those still opting to receive paper copies may be delayed until the statutory deadline of January 31, 2026, for the 2025 calendar year W-2s.
- Sustainability: Help reduce paper use and support GVSU's sustainability initiatives. Fewer paper copies help GVSU conserve resources, too.
- Convenience: Your W-2 will be available anytime, reducing the risk of losing it.

### Need Support?

For support with W-2s in Workday, please email payroll at [payroll@gvsu.edu](mailto:payroll@gvsu.edu).

## PROTECTING YOUR TAX INFORMATION: WHY EMAIL AND ONLINE STORAGE AREN'T SECURE OPTIONS

BY IT SECURITY

Tax season can bring a flurry of activity, from gathering documents to filing returns. While it's important to streamline the process, it's equally critical to prioritize the security of your sensitive tax information. At Grand Valley State University, safeguarding personal data is a shared responsibility. One key step in this effort is avoiding email and online storage for handling tax documents.

### Why Not Email?

Emails may seem convenient for sharing tax forms, but they're not secure. Here's why:

1. **Risk of Interception:** Emails can be intercepted during transmission, especially if they're not encrypted. Cybercriminals can exploit this to access sensitive details like your Social Security Number or tax filing status.
2. **Phishing Threats:** Sharing tax information via email can make you a target for phishing scams. Scammers often disguise themselves as legitimate entities to trick users into revealing personal data.
3. **Accidental Misdelivery:** Sending an email to the wrong recipient is easier than you think. A simple typo can expose your sensitive information to unintended parties.

*(Continued on next page)*







# CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS



## PROTECTING YOUR TAX INFORMATION: WHY EMAIL AND ONLINE STORAGE AREN'T SECURE OPTIONS BY IT SECURITY

*(Continued from previous page)*

### Why Avoid Online Storage?

Storing tax information on cloud platforms or other online services might also seem like a convenient choice, but it poses significant risks:

1. **Data Breaches:** Cloud storage providers are frequent targets for hackers. If the platform experiences a breach, your tax information could be exposed.
2. **Weak Passwords or permissions:** Many users rely on weak or reused passwords for their online accounts, making it easier for attackers to gain access. Additionally, users may accidentally allow global access for a shared file including tax documents.

### Best Practices for Safeguarding Tax Information

To ensure your tax information remains secure, consider the following tips:

1. **Use Secure Methods:** When sharing tax documents, use encrypted file-sharing services or deliver them in person.
2. **Store Offline:** Keep tax documents in a secure, locked location, such as a fireproof safe, rather than online.
3. **Be Cautious with Digital Files:** If you must store electronic copies, encrypt the files and save them on a secure external drive that's kept offline.
4. **Monitor Your Accounts:** Regularly check your financial accounts and credit reports for any suspicious activity.
5. **Follow University Guidelines:** Adhere to GVSU's data security policies and practices for managing sensitive information.

### Resources and Support

GVSU's IT team is here to help. If you have questions about securely managing your tax documents or need assistance with encryption tools, don't hesitate to contact us. Together, we can protect your personal information and reduce the risk of data breaches.

By taking these precautions, you're not only safeguarding your own data but also contributing to a more secure community at GVSU. Let's work together to keep our personal and institutional information safe.



# CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS

OFFICE OF  
**MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS**

*Continuing to Create*

# **BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025**

**THE BLACKOUT:  
BLACK STUDENT ORGANIZATION SHOWCASE AND  
NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY TESTING**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 6:00PM-8:00PM - KIRKHOF CENTER (LOBBY)**  
PRESENTED BY BLACK EXCELLENCE 365, BLACK STUDENT UNION AND THE CENTER FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**BLACK HISTORICAL LIVING MUSEUM**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 6:00PM-8:00PM - KIRKHOF CENTER (GRAND RIVER ROOM)**  
PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL PAN-HELLENIC COUNCIL

**TASTE OF SOUL**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2:00PM-4:00PM - KIRKHOF CENTER (LOUNGE)**

**BLACK BUSINESS POP-UP**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 11:00AM-4:00PM - KIRKHOF CENTER (LOBBY)**  
PRESENTED BY BLACK EXCELLENCE 365 AND THE CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION



**FOR ADDITIONAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS AND UPDATES,  
PLEASE VISIT [WWW.GVSU.EDU/OMA/BHM](http://WWW.GVSU.EDU/OMA/BHM) OR SCAN THE QR CODE**

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY IS COMMITTED TO A POLICY OF EQUAL ACCESS TO PROGRAMS, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES. IF YOU REQUIRE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATIONS, OR TO REQUEST A PARKING PERMIT, CONTACT THE OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS AT (616) 331-2177. EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. VISIT [WWW.GVSU.EDU/OMA](http://WWW.GVSU.EDU/OMA) FOR MORE INFORMATION.



Visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/oma/black-history-month-celebration-24.htm> for more information and for more events!



# CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS

## KIDS DAY BASKETBALL GAME & JERSEY BY ATHLETICS



Get a FREE youth jersey with the purchase of a ticket (only \$6) for the Saturday, March 1, GVSU Basketball Games. Available while supplies last.

[Buy Tickets Here!](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS

Meet Sam Condon, Academic Department Coordinator, Psychology Department. Sam contributed so much to this month's newsletter, that I felt he deserved his own blurb :). Sam shared with us that he just passed his 6-month probation period evaluation, joined the Union, and is here to stick around for as long as GVSU will have him! Sam also shared that the Psychology department is fully staffed for the first time in 6 months - wahoo!! Sam moved to Michigan in July and is surviving his first Michigan winter! "Wow, I was not prepared for all this snow. It's a new way of life."

Thanks for all your contributions, Sam. We are so happy to have you join the APSS Union and the amazing team of support staff at GVSU! Welcome!





# HIGHLIGHTS

## WELCOME BABY!

Luke Elijah Adams was born on 1/22/2025 at 3:00 AM. He weighed 7lbs 8oz and was 20.5 inches long. He is the second grandchild of proud Grandma **Christine Adams**, Interprofessional Simulation Center. Congrats to the whole family!

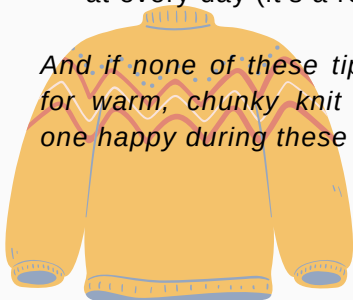
## SELF CARE TIPS

**Sam Condon**, Psychology Department, shared some self care tips. A chunky sweater sounds wonderful!

### Some fun tips for self-care include:

- more human interaction and/or nature time, and less technology time (don't rot your brain)
- a therapy 'sun' lamp during the dark, winter months
- lots of face masks and moisturizing (because this cold weather dries out the skin)
- plenty of chocolate and white wine (because obviously)
- eating your favorite foods (because life is too short to not enjoy good food)
- visiting cat cafes (because who doesn't love cute animal snuggles?)
- taking plenty of vitamins (your body will thank you)
- setting aside time to enjoy a 5-10 minute meditation and/or deep breathing exercise (calm your body and stress levels)
- and finding something truly fun to laugh or giggle at every day (it's a reminder that you're human).

*And if none of these tips help, I find that shopping for warm, chunky knit sweaters can always make one happy during these cold months.*



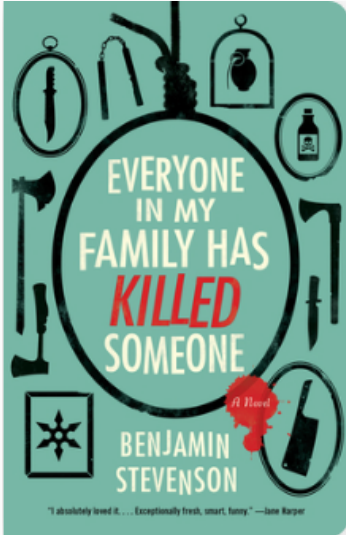
## CELEBRATING SEOLLAL

**Elle Hilley**, Academic Records, celebrated Seollal (Korean New Year) with friends and the Korean American Society of Greater Ann Arbor!



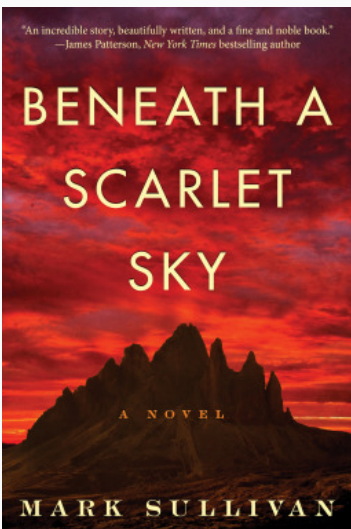
# HIGHLIGHTS

# Book recommendations



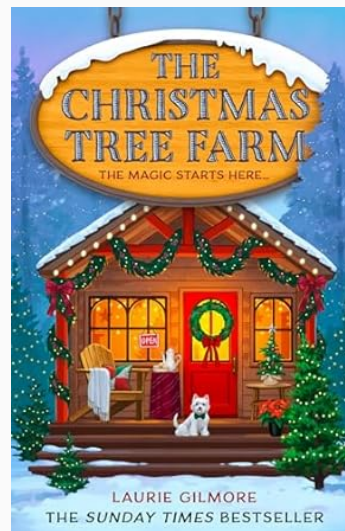
## Everyone in my Family Has Killed Someone by Benjamin Stevenson

Recommended by Allison Bazaire, College of Computing. "The Title doesn't let on how humorous and somewhat cozy this book is. It's also very atmospheric for these snow-days we have been experiencing! It all takes place at a ski resort that is snowed in."



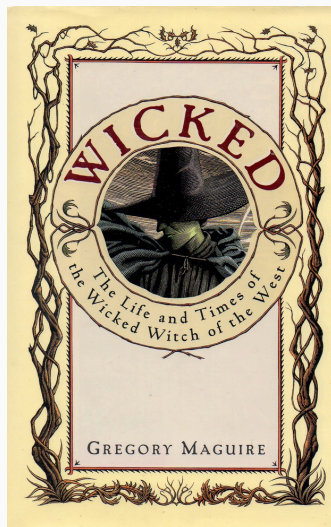
## Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark Sullivan

Recommended by Sam Condon, Psychology. Based on the true story of a forgotten hero, *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* is the triumphant, epic tale of one young man's incredible courage and resilience during one of history's darkest hours (WWII novel).



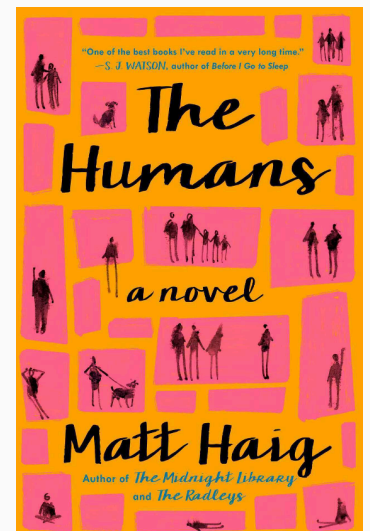
## The Christmas Tree Farm by Laurie Gilmore

Recommended by Sam Condon, Psychology. "Currently reading - A cheesy/smuttery TikTok rec - so far so good."



## Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire

Recommended by Sam Condon, Psychology. "Recently read before the movie. So dark!"



## The Humans by Matt Haig

Recommended by Kelli Dykstra, Public Safety. "This is a unique take on what it means to be human in a quirky, imaginative novel told from the point of view of an extra-terrestrial visitor to Earth. I really enjoyed it!"

# HIGHLIGHTS

# Book recommendations

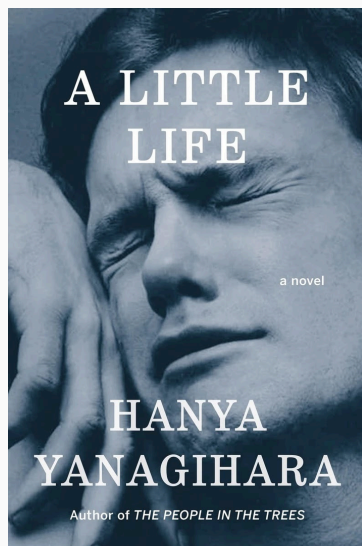


**The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah**  
Recommended by **Sam Condon**, Psychology. WWII novel taking place in France, 1939.



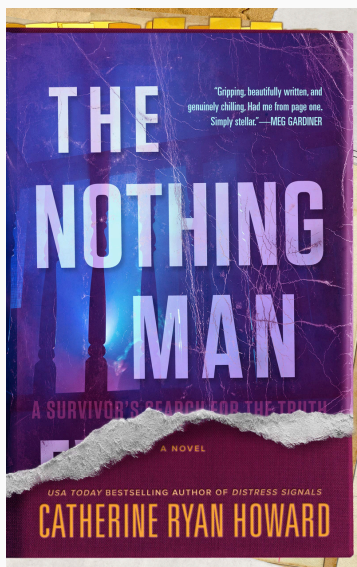
**As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow by Zoulfa Katouh**  
Recommended by **Kelli Dykstra**, Public Safety. "An amazing story told from the point of view of a young woman growing up in war torn Syria. This gave me just a small insight into what it may be to live in a country ravaged by war."

**A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara**  
Recommended by **Sam Condon**, Psychology. "A TikTok recommendation - so sad!"



**Flowers in the Dark: Reclaiming Your Power to Heal from Trauma with Mindfulness by Sister Dang Nghiem**

Recommended by **Elle Hilley**, Academic Records. Learn the accessible and deeply compassionate practices for healing trauma, known as the Five Strengths of applied Zen Buddhism.



**The Nothing Man by Catherine Ryan Howard**  
Recommended by **Kelli Dykstra**, Public Safety. "Told from the point of view of a serial killer reading a true crime book written about him (he hasn't been identified yet). A good thriller in an interesting format!"



## 2024-2025 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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FH, MAN

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VICKI WENGER

LOH, NMH

DENISE GROSS

CHS, DCIH, RFH

CHERYL KOTECKI

DEV 3RD-5TH FLOORS, SCB

MARISA VREDEVOGD

ASH, AGS, LHH, LSH, PAC

NICOLE BROWER

LIB

BRIAN DENUYL

AH, CUB, SER

RAYSHENA WILSON

DEP, DEV 1ST & 2ND FLOORS

TREENA GILBERT

BIK, CEC, IDC, KEN, WAT

ASH GODIN

EC

### CAMPUS DATES

13TH - STATE OF THE STUDENT BODY  
21ST-22ND - SIBS & KIDS WEEKEND  
[GVSU.EDU/EVENTS](http://GVSU.EDU/EVENTS)

### BIRTHDAYS

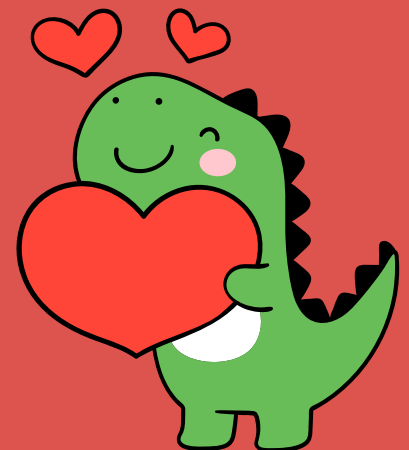
2ND - KATIE HAYNES  
12TH - MARIA PALACIO  
14TH - ALLISON BAZAIRE  
20TH - LINDSEY BURNS  
24TH - ERICA BAKER-BRINGEDAHL

### GVSU ANNIVERSARY

1ST - JORDAN SICKREY  
4TH - NICHOLE PAYNE  
23RD - SHERRI HALL  
19TH - TAMMY TOBAR  
26TH - SHYCEKA ARMSTRONG

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

14TH - RHONDA LEMIEUX



SHARE PICTURES OF YOUR PETS FOR THE MARCH NEWSLETTER!!

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY. FOR SUBMISSION INFORMATION, CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR.