



Grand Rapids Community College

FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



2020-21 AT-A-GLANCE

ASSETS

\$46
MILLION

TOTAL FUNDS

527

CONTRIBUTIONS

\$3
MILLION

DONORS

624

STUDENTS AWARDED

1,015

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

\$1.28
MILLION

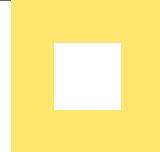
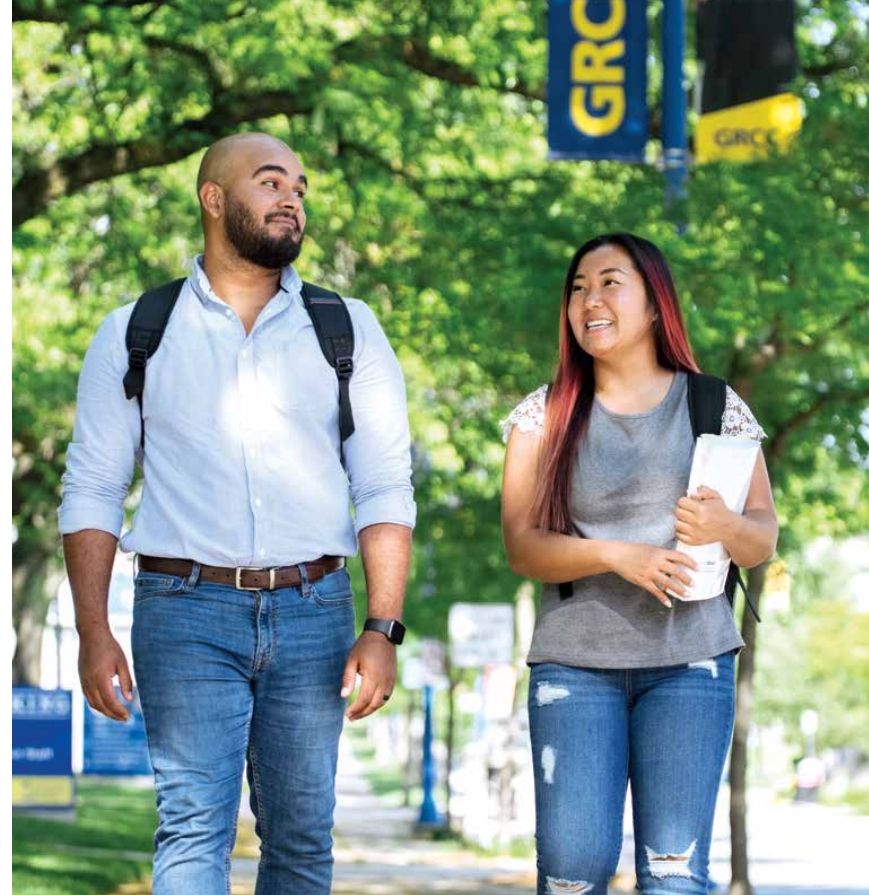


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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR

The pandemic tested us all. It forced us to reflect upon all that we do in a new light. It made us more aware of the difficulties so many of our community members face. It challenged us to find more and better ways to connect with the people we serve and make sure they will be stronger in the days and years ahead.

We often speak of our mission to be relevant and responsive to our community. The pandemic added a new R: We must be resilient.

It would have been easy to look at the vast challenges that our college, community and nation have faced during these past two years and say they were just too much.

But that's not what we do here at Grand Rapids Community College. We are the place people turn to in difficult times. That's a role we embrace. We are resilient.

The pages of this report share stories of determined students and the people who supported them.

We talk about transformation. That can be a closed department store reimaged as a state-of-the-art GRCC Lakeshore Campus to make a quality education more accessible. That can be the student who wanted a better life and is now on a path to success. That can be the alumni using skills honed at our institution to battle our toughest problems or to lift up others.

A common thread runs through all of these stories. These transformations happen because someone believes in the

dream and believes in the people. That someone is you. Your support for the Grand Rapids Community College Foundation makes all of this possible. Your continued support – your resiliency – during these times made a difference and will continue to do so.

It's difficult to imagine the number of lives you have touched and the ripples spreading outward from the people who stand taller today because you cared about them.

There are so many others who need our help. We are determined to continue being that relevant and responsive place. We hope you can continue assisting us as we move forward together.

We humbly thank you for your generous support of the GRCC Foundation and our greater community.

Sincerely,

Bill Pink, Ph.D., GRCC President

James V. Buzzitta, M.D., Foundation Board Chair

ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR LAKESHORE STUDENTS



DONORS HELP LAY FOUNDATION FOR LAKESHORE FUTURE

Gentex might be best-known for its automatic-dimming rearview mirrors, but it is always thinking ahead, which is why company leaders threw their support behind GRCC’s plan for a consolidated Lakeshore Campus.

“As a technology company, we employ a highly skilled workforce,” said Steve Downing, Gentex CEO and president. “We value continual learning and career advancement, which is why we maintain a robust tuition reimbursement program. At any given time, Gentex has numerous employees continuing their education, taking classes and working toward their degrees.”

Downing said Gentex plans to work with GRCC on programs to support the company’s needs as well as the surrounding manufacturing base. The company currently employs more than 200 GRCC alumni.

“The new GRCC Lakeshore Campus will allow our workforce to access GRCC’s state-of-the-art teaching and learning right in our own backyard!”

Gentex is one of many donors that stepped up to support the Lakeshore Campus. Others include:

- James W. Brooks.
- Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area.
- GMB Architecture + Engineering.
- Haworth.
- Herman Miller.
- Hudsonville Creamery and Ice Cream LLC.

Former JCPenney site transforms into new campus, centralizing and consolidating services, programs.

The new GRCC Lakeshore Campus makes a perfect case for the expression “less is more,” with services and classes offered at four scattered Ottawa County locations coming together in a central site.

For GRCC President Bill Pink, the 2019 purchase of a former JCPenney at the Shops at Westshore Mall was all about access – bringing the college’s successful programs to more students.

“This location enhances the GRCC Lakeshore campus’s ability to be relative and responsive to our West Michigan communities,” he said. “Our college is uniquely positioned to help learners connect – or reconnect – with higher education. We’re proud of what we

provide now and are excited to think about how we can impact lives long into the future.”

Ottawa County leaders were quick to praise GRCC’s plan to renovate the 50,000-square-foot space in Holland Township, and Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation, quickly found herself fielding pledges of support from Ottawa residents and businesses.

“Area leaders and educators have seen the advantages of a centralized Lakeshore Campus, not only in opportunities for students but for businesses looking to keep their employees’ training up to date,” she said. “Ottawa County has been generous, even through a pandemic.”

The new campus, which opened to the public in August, will allow more

Ottawa County residents to access higher education and keep current with the training they need for 21st century careers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 57.2 percent of Ottawa County residents ages 25 and older have little – or no – college experience.

Jennifer Owens, president of Lakeshore Advantage, a nonprofit economic development organization, notes that statistic has far-reaching consequences: “Access to higher education is a key driver for economic prosperity.”

GRCC Lakeshore Campus is not only much larger – it’s also centrally located at U.S. 31 and James Street. Students can access services, such as testing, counseling, placement and a satellite library, in one place. It’s also on a Macatawa Area Express bus line – a crucial element in overcoming the transportation barrier many Ottawa County residents face.

These programs can now be completed entirely on the Lakeshore:

- Associate of Arts.
- Associate of General Studies.
- Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences-Industrial Maintenance Technology.
- Certificate in Industrial Maintenance.
- Certificate of Industrial Technology.
- Certificate in Tooling and Manufacturing.
- Certificate in Welding.

The new space will also allow more employer and educator partnerships and plans call for additional programs, possibly in health care, early childhood education and teaching.

During the Lakeshore Campus’ ribbon cutting, student Kelsey Sivertson, who returned to college in her late 20s and is now a year away from her pre-English

literature degree, shared what the new site will mean to her and future students.

“As I look at this new Lakeshore Campus, I see opportunity for Ottawa County students like me to drive 10 rather than 35 minutes to class,” she said. “I see accessibility for those who get off work at 5 – they’ll be able to make it to a 5:30 class with time to spare for a quick coffee or tea. Most importantly, I see hope. I see a community that believes in its residents, even those who for a long time have felt stuck.”

“President Pink, you have chosen to take this empty mall that once stood as a representation of failure and repurposed it with promise and meaning and hope. And in doing that, you have vocalized your belief that people like me can do the same.”

1998

GRCC collaborates with the OAISD, the state and area businesses to create the Patrick A. Thompson Michigan Technical Educational Center, which opens in fall 2000.

2005

The North Central Accrediting Agency authorizes GRCC to offer courses allowing students to earn an associate degree and certificates without having to drive to the Grand Rapids campus.

2006

West Ottawa Public Schools partners with GRCC to offer evening courses at North High School.

2007

GRCC works with Grand Valley State University’s Meijer Campus to offer more courses.

2009

GRCC begins providing classes, academic programs and support services in the renovated Midtown Center.

2019

GRCC announces plans to purchase the former JCPenney site at the Shops of Westshore Mall as a new Lakeshore Campus.

2021 [AUGUST]

GRCC celebrates opening of its new Lakeshore Campus with a week of open houses.

Peter Secchia's impact felt throughout GRCC



Former ambassador, 83, passed away from COVID-19 in 2020.

Businessman, ambassador and civic leader Peter Secchia was a generous supporter of institutions and organizations throughout West Michigan, but it was at GRCC where he found a home for both his belief in the power of higher education and his passion for great cooking.

Secchia, who passed away from COVID-19 in October 2020 at the age of 83, was a longtime supporter of GRCC's culinary program, which was renamed the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education in 2007 in honor of him and his wife, Joan.

The state-of-the-art Pietro and Regina Amphitheater, named after his grandparents, was added in 2012.

The 54-seat facility is used for teaching, cooking demonstrations and special events.

"My grandparents were just wonderful people" Secchia said at the unveiling of the amphitheater. "I am very proud of all of these students and really honored to be celebrating that Pietro and Regina are still alive and their spirit is in this room."

He helped GRCC meet the talent demand created by Grand Rapids' growing craft beer industry with the 2016 launch of Peter's Pub, part of the culinary program's Fountain Hill Brewery.

Peter's Pub, named for Secchia, was launched in 2016 as part of GRCC's Fountain Hill Brewery, tapping into the demand created by Grand Rapids' growing craft beer industry.

"If we can train people to be ready for jobs, that, to me, is a magnificent function of a community college," he said.

"In large part, the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education is a world-class culinary school because of Mr. Secchia's generosity and contagious drive for excellence," said chef Werner Absenger, the program's director. "Mr. Secchia always wanted to make sure our students had the tools necessary to become successful hospitality industry leaders. His spirit and drive for excellence will be sorely missed."

If we can train people to be ready for jobs, that, to me, is a magnificent function of a community college."

– Peter Secchia

The Secchia family also supported the installation of a statue of Helen Claytor on GRCC's Juan Olivarez Student Plaza in 2014 as part of the Grand Rapids Community Legends project. Claytor was a civil rights activist and the first African-American president of the national YWCA.

"Peter Secchia touched so many lives throughout West Michigan," said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation. "He believed our students capable of great things and worked to make sure they had the support they need to achieve them."

Bob Woodrick focused efforts on recognizing, healing racism



Former D&W chairman worked with GRCC to educate, promote conversations throughout West Michigan.

Bob Woodrick sought to challenge the hearts and minds of people in West Michigan about what he described as "the disease of racism."

Woodrick, who passed away in October 2020, spent most of his life promoting community conversations and education on the topic through the Bob and Aleicia Woodrick Center for Equity and Inclusion.

"Bob Woodrick understood West Michigan cannot truly be successful until everyone has an opportunity to thrive," GRCC President Bill Pink said. "For decades, he opened eyes, changed minds and challenged

people to take a look at themselves and their communities. The world we are living in today shows us we have more work to do. Bob's leadership helped ensure GRCC is a place where that work can and will continue."

GRCC renamed its Diversity Learning Center after the Woodricks in 2006 after the couple generously supported the program's improvement. It was renamed the Bob and Aleicia Woodrick Center for Equity and Inclusion in 2016 to reflect the expansion of its work both on and off campus.

Through the center, GRCC and surrounding communities are provided with the opportunity to experience cultural competence through community partnerships, academic colloquium, youth conferences, student engagement initiatives, and programming that advances responsive social justice.

Woodrick began his career in the family business, D&W Food Centers in Grand Rapids, and worked there his entire life, leaving only for college and the military. He served many roles, including president and CEO, and chairman of the board.

"I believe that racism is real, and that it is wrong – and that its presence with us has not diminished," he wrote in a 1996 essay in The Grand Rapids Press. "Furthermore, I believe our denial plays a significant role in masking racism; only when we acknowledge our denial can the healing of racism begin."

Woodrick's advocacy led to the Institutes for Healing Racism, now a partnership between GRCC's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Grand Rapids Chamber. The Woodricks also collaborated with Aquinas College to establish the Woodrick Institute for the Study of Racism and Diversity.

"GRCC has always been dedicated to helping students be everything they are capable of becoming. And learning to appreciate and understand the role that diversity plays in that process cannot be underestimated," Woodrick said at the GRCC center's dedication. "It's an honor for Alecia and I to be able to support GRCC and build upon the Diversity Learning Center's decade of success. The future of our community depends upon us getting it right."

"GRCC has always been dedicated to helping students be everything they are capable of becoming. And learning to appreciate and understand the role that diversity plays in that process cannot be underestimated."
– Bob Woodrick

USING SUCCESS TO HELP OTHERS SUCCEED

GRCC honors life, legacy of journalist Sekou Smith.

Alumnus Sekou Smith built a career by combining his love for writing and for sports. He built a lasting legacy by sharing his passion and helping others succeed.

Smith, an analyst for NBA TV and host of the popular “Hang Time” podcast, attended Grand Rapids Junior and Grand Rapids Community colleges between 1990 and 1992. His death in January from COVID-19, at the age of 48, brought tributes from NBA stars, his writing colleagues and the many young professionals he had mentored over the years, as well as condolences to his wife, Heather Pulliam, and his children Gabriel, Rielly and Cameron.

His father, Walter Smith, said he was comforted by so many kind words.

“We knew who he was as a son and a brother, but I did not really know the reach he had around the world,” said Walter Smith, who is also a GRCC alumnus. “It took me a little time to be able to read them, but there have been some really nice tributes. The ones I treasure the most are primarily the ones from Grand Rapids. It’s where we have

our roots. And wherever Sekou went in the world, he never forgot where we came from.”

After leaving GRCC, Sekou Smith attended Jackson State University in Mississippi, where he became interested in journalism. His sports writing career started at The Clarion-Ledger in Jackson; he then covered the Indianapolis Pacers for the Indianapolis Star and then the Atlanta Hawks for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

He connected with the NBA’s media teams in 2009. In addition to serving as an analyst and podcast host, he wrote for NBA.com, penning the “MVP Weekly” column.

“Sekou was one of the most affable and dedicated reporters in the NBA and a terrific friend to so many across

Put yourself out there and ask for help if you need it. Make sure you find mentors and role models and be proactive in asking them for any help you might need.”
– Sekou Smith

the league,” NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said in a statement following Smith’s death.

In addition to renaming the media workroom at State Farm Arena in his honor, the Hawks created a Sekou Smith Award to annually honor the player on the team’s roster who best represents themselves and the franchise with professionalism and integrity in their interactions with the media.

The team also created a Hawks-NBA Summer League internship in Smith’s name for a journalism or multimedia student from a Southwestern Athletic Conference school.

Smith’s sister Misti Stanton said he always had a passion for helping others. As he became well-known for his work in the media, he looked for ways to use his influence to help people grow and thrive, Stanton said, adding that her brother strongly believed in the impact positive role models have on young people.

Stanton, also a GRCC alumna, is vice president and diversity, equity and inclusion officer at Mercantile Bank. She said Smith was planning to speak to Grand Rapids high school students at a Mercantile Bank leadership camp in 2015 when he was suddenly

assigned to interview basketball star LeBron James in Boston.

Smith insisted he be able to keep his Grand Rapids commitment and addressed the students and took questions via video.

“Don’t have your guard up all the time,” he told them. “Put yourself out there and ask for help if you need it. Make sure you find mentors and role models and be proactive in asking them for any help you might need.”

Many young professionals found their mentor and role model in Smith, a member of the National Association of Black Journalists.

“Sekou was part of a community that made sure I was taken care of as a cub,” said Marcus Thompson, lead columnist for The Athletic and author of “Golden: The Miraculous Rise of Steph Curry” in a Tweet.

“Sekou Smith was one of the first NABJ-ers to take me under his wing and make me feel like I belonged,” ESPN reporter Malika Andrews Tweeted. “He pushed to bring the best out of young reporters, was a fierce advocate of diversity in journalism – and did it with a smile on his face.”

TRIBUTES INCLUDE GRCC’S 2021 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS HONOR

GRCC’s four commencement ceremonies included a tribute to journalist Sekou Smith, who was honored as the 2021 Distinguished Alumnus.

Smith graduated from Grand Rapids Central High School at the age of 17 with an uncertain picture of his future.

“He wasn’t quite sure what his next journey would be, but he knew – because we come from a tradition of Smiths attending Grand Rapids Community College – and so he knew that that was his next step,” said Smith’s sister, Misti Stanton.

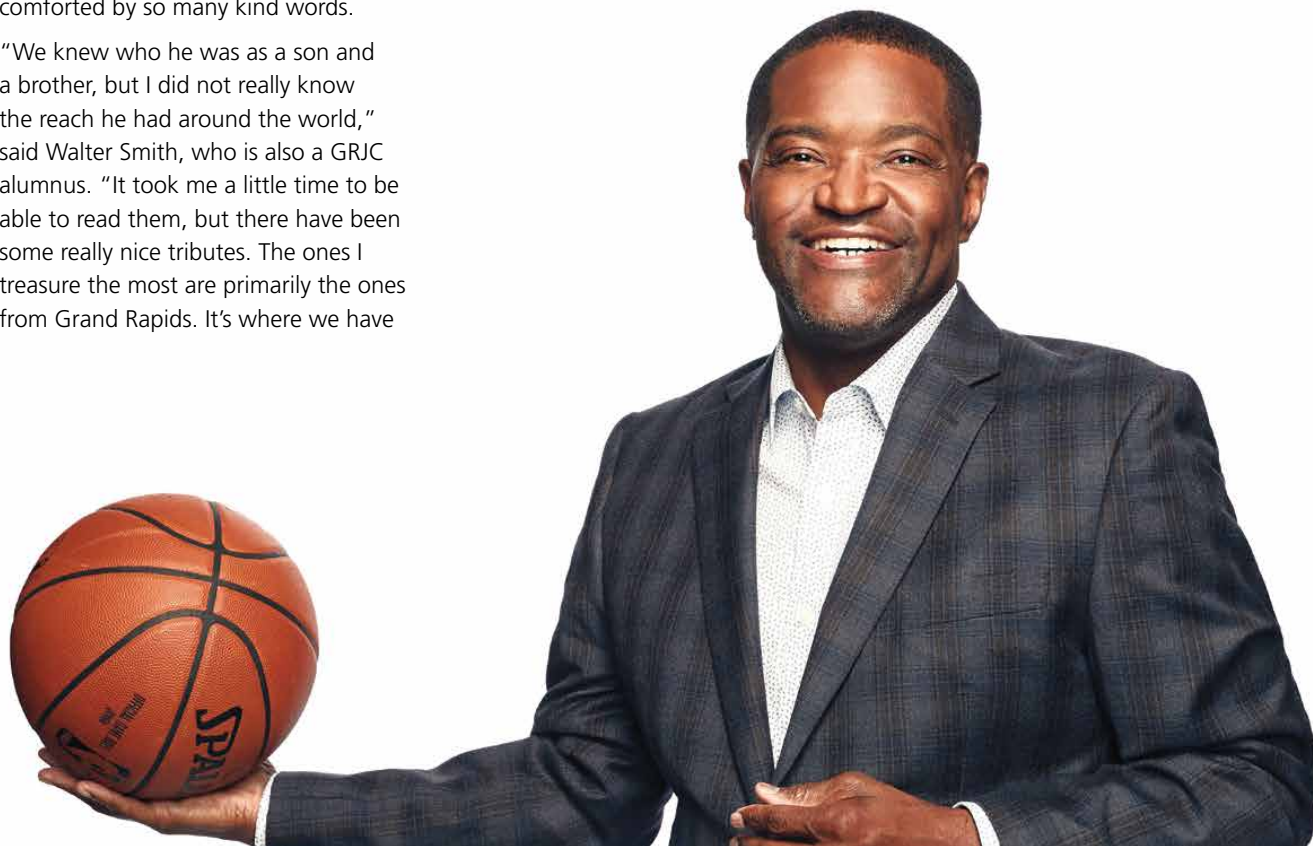
Smith attended Grand Rapids Junior and Grand Rapids Community colleges between 1990 and 1992. He then enrolled at Jackson State University in Mississippi, where he became interested in journalism.

“He knew that GRCC helped to build his confidence to be able to leave his hometown and go off to Jackson State University,” Stanton said.

Throughout a career that took him from newspaper sports writer to work as an analyst and podcaster for NBA.com, Smith looked for opportunities to help others, encouraging young writers through such organizations as the National Association of Black Journalists, Athletes for Computer Science, and Mercantile Bank leadership camps.

Smith passed away from COVID-19 in January at the age of 48. He leaves his wife, Heather, and children Gabriel, Rielly and Cameron.

“Sekou Smith shined brightly, and it’s heartbreaking to lose someone so young and talented,” GRCC President Bill Pink said. “Rather than focus on the pain of his loss, we can celebrate an amazing life and career of someone who made a difference to basketball fans around the country and around the world. Sekou is an inspiration to GRCC students today and always.”



THE RIGHT MEDICINE

Foundation board chair works to strengthen GRCC resources, scholarships.

As chairman of the GRCC Foundation's board of directors, Dr. Jim Buzzitta works to make sure students get the support they need to achieve their dreams.

As an alumnus, he knows firsthand how life-changing a start at GRCC can be.

"Grand Rapids Community College means a lot to me," he said. "It deeply impacted my life and allowed for a great education and set a solid foundation for me to succeed in life."

During his senior year at Ottawa Hills High School, Buzzitta knew he wanted to pursue medicine. He was also certain that he wanted to go to the University of Michigan – until his advisor suggested starting at what was then Grand Rapids Junior College.

"Funds were tight in the Buzzitta family at that time, and I had heard good things about Grand Rapids Junior College's pre-med program, so I enrolled," he said. "I could live at home while attending classes, and this also helped with expenses."

Buzzitta was one of two students who received the college's Arthur Andrews Award in 1974 for having a perfect 4.0 GPA. He completed his undergraduate work at U of M,

graduating with honors, and then went to Wayne State University's School of Medicine.

He returned to West Michigan to do his residency in internal medicine at Butterworth Hospital. In 1987, the group of physicians he worked with asked him to run the practice.

"I started talking to them about the possibility of getting doctors of different specialties to work together," he said. "It just made sense to me. I felt it was important to patient care. I thought it was a better way for doctors to practice."

Buzzitta founded Michigan Medical P.C., a physician-owned and governed medical corporation, in 1989 with four doctors and eight staff members. He served as CEO, board chair, chief medical officer and managing shareholder. When he retired from MMPC in 2007, it had grown to more than 300 medical providers and 1,500 employees. MMPC merged with Spectrum Health in 2009.

While Buzzitta still speaks nationally on health care topics, he now serves as president and owner of Hughes Management Group, which invests in real estate, venture capital and private equity. He and his wife, Kathleen, have six children.

His leadership skills are in demand throughout West Michigan, and he has served on boards for Spectrum

Health, the Grand Valley State University Foundation, the West Michigan Physicians Network and the Immaculate Heart of Mary School.

Buzzitta became the chairperson for the GRCC Foundation in 2019 and recently served as co-chair of A Broader Vision, the capital campaign that raised almost \$23 million to improve campus facilities and provide scholarships to more students.

His work with the foundation has special meaning for him.

"It has been an honor and a pleasure to be part of GRCC through its foundation," said Buzzitta, who was named the college's Distinguished Alumnus in 2011. "Even though tuition at GRCC is a bargain, many students still need help. I am proud of what the GRCC Foundation has done, but more work is needed until we can provide funding to all students who want to attend."

Buzzitta calls GRCC a "jewel."

"I mean there's nothing else like it in this region," he said. "We have wonderful four-year colleges. We have a medical school now in the area. We have a lot of unique things. But I can't see this area without having the community college here. It is vital now.

"It is not only a wonderful thing to have here: It's a necessity."



GENERATIONS OF BUZZITTAS BUILD LEGACY OF GIVING

Philanthropy is woven through the Buzzitta family.

Dr. Jim Buzzitta's father, Louis, worked in a factory until enrolling in finance and accounting classes at Davenport University. He graduated in 1959 and then went on to earn an industrial engineering degree at Michigan State University.

"My Italian immigrant grandparents had little formal education," James Buzzitta said. "They had to work to make money to support their family in their new country – and work they did! My grandparents appreciated the importance of education, and my father benefited from that, as did all their grandchildren."

Louis Buzzitta was president of Leon Plastics in Grand

Rapids and owned Hughes Plastics in St. Joseph and Leon Plastics in Grand Rapids before establishing Hughes Management in 1983. He served on the Davenport foundation's board and he and his wife, Catherine, established the Louis V. and Catherine Buzzitta scholarship there to support working students. He passed away in 2001.

Jim Buzzitta has honored that legacy by establishing the Dr. James V. Buzzitta Family Scholarship at GRCC. He calls it one of his greatest accomplishments.

"There is nothing better in life than to help others with the hope that when they become successful, they will, in turn, also help others."

ANTHONY CLARK JR. PLANS NBA FUTURE – ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

Former college dropout says scholarship motivates him to keep working toward goals.

Anthony Clark Jr. originally set his sights on professional basketball but realized “my genetics were not equipped for such a tall order.”

Clark still plans to make it to the NBA, but he’s putting in the necessary work in the classroom instead of the basketball court.

“My goals are to become a journalist, analyst or commentator for an organization in the league and work my way up to these types of positions for the entirety of the league,” he said.

“I love basketball and everything to do with it.”

Clark picked GRCC as the first step toward his goal because it was an easy commute from his Kentwood home, affordable and had credits that transfer easily to many four-year universities.

The scholarship he was awarded from the GRCC Foundation only reinforced his certainty that GRCC was the best choice for him.

“Receiving the Scott McNabb Journalism Scholarship gave me a revelation: I was and currently am in

the right place in life – even when I have bad days and want to give up,” Clark said.

That’s a reassuring feeling – especially for someone who had previously dropped out of college.

Clark is now determined to eventually earn a degree in sports communications, but he hopes to start work on his career even before graduating.

“I would love to build my own broadcasting network while still in college to create a rich foundation in knowledge and purpose and continue to expand on that network as time goes on,” he said. “My main aspiration is to reach a platform that is nationally, or even globally, televised so that I can be a voice for people who have suffered the same disparities as I have in life.”

The scholarship has eased some of the financial burden of college, giving Clark more time to help his mother at home with his two younger siblings.

“It allowed me to breathe a little easier knowing grocery costs would not be as detrimental, knowing that my vehicle would have a full tank of gas – always a priority no matter what financial obligations I have,” he said. “Without

question, it allowed me to know that hard work in school can pay off.”

Clark credits the poverty, food scarcity and homelessness he’s experienced in the past with giving him maturity and a strong work ethic, which kept him on task and focused on his goals during the pandemic.

“Online learning was, honestly, not as hard as I expected it to be, but it needs to be acknowledged that there were hundreds of millions of young students in this country and across the globe who battled the same adversities that I have – times a million,” he said.

“I feel for the millions of children who looked forward to being in school, as their only meal for the day was the lunch provided by their school. I feel for the children who needed seven or eight hours to escape the realities of their broken, abusive or desperate home environments. I feel for the children with learning disabilities and impairments who needed extra help from teachers and instead were met with distance learning. I was fortunate enough to have a stable environment during the time; unfortunately, millions of other students were not.”

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2020-2021

AT&T Scholarship

Eugene Swope Scholarship

Versiti Blood Center of Michigan – Phlebotomy Skills Scholarship

NEWLY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2020-2021

Many donors choose to name their endowed scholarship after a person they love or to establish a permanent legacy. We are so thankful for our newly endowed scholarship funds, which will help countless students for years to come.

Kenyatta and Tracey Brame Scholarship

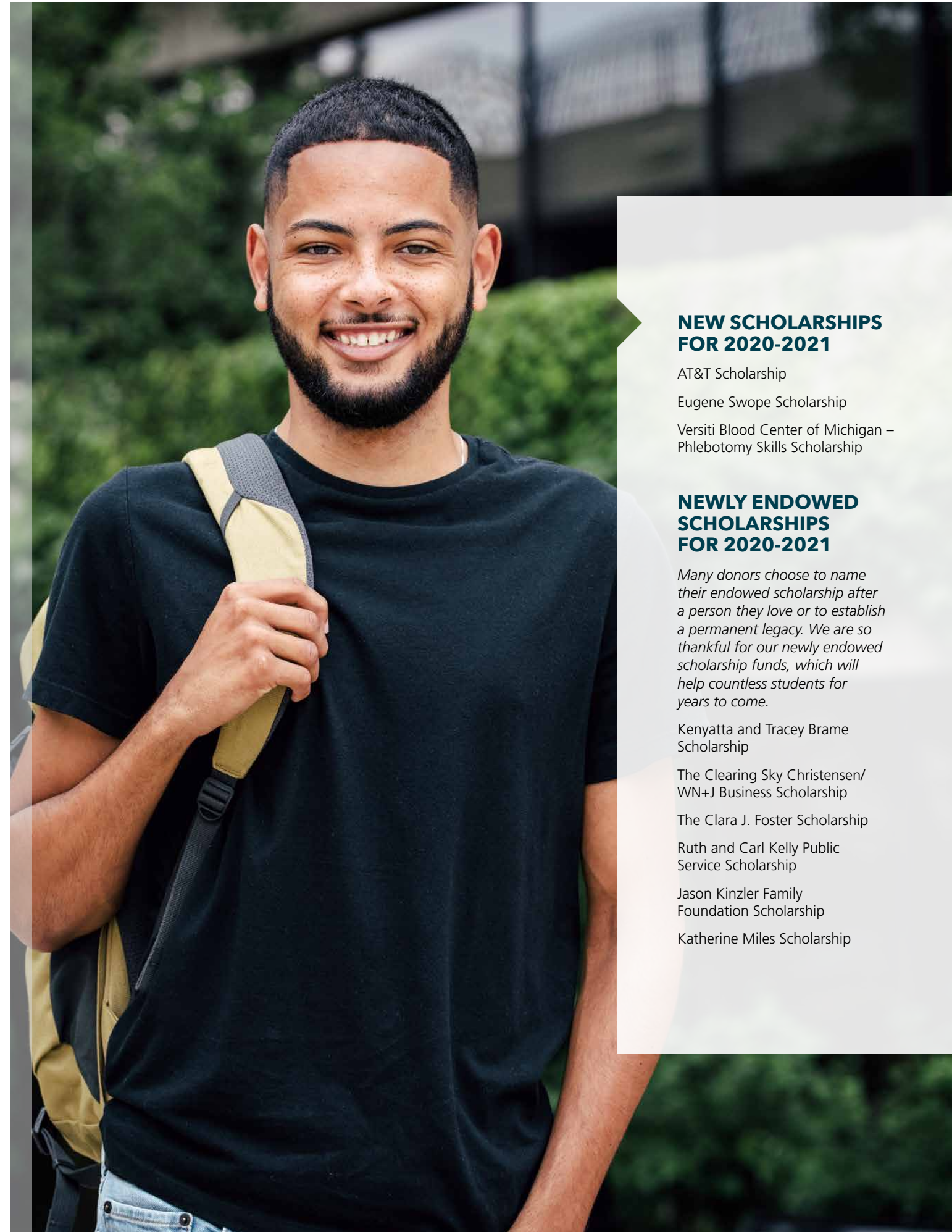
The Clearing Sky Christensen/WN+J Business Scholarship

The Clara J. Foster Scholarship

Ruth and Carl Kelly Public Service Scholarship

Jason Kinzler Family Foundation Scholarship

Katherine Miles Scholarship



ANOTHER WAY TO HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT



Anna Maria Clark extends her reach with scholarship for TRIO students.

GRCC's TRIO/Student Support Services program is equipped with academic resources, mentors, financial guidance, counseling and other supports to help low-income and first-generation students succeed. But academic advisor Anna Maria Clark saw that some needs were still unmet.

"So many times, we had students with needs – sometimes immediate – and we did not have the tools to help," she said.

That led Clark to start donating regularly to the SSSP Special Needs Scholarship.

"We had seen an increase in emergency needs from our students, and the fund was a natural fit to support and access resources for them," she said.

Clark, a native of Chile, was herself a first-generation college student. She attended the Universidad de Chile, the Reifshneider School of Photography and the Center for Tourism Studies. Just a year after arriving in the United States, she enrolled at Grand Valley State University. She has a bachelor's degree in communications with a minor in health education and a master's in social work.

"I faced many of the challenges our students face, and I am extremely grateful for the friends and mentors who supported me along the way," she said. "Having resources – and access to them – is extremely important, and they served as navigators the same way we at GRCC hope to be there for our students every day!"

Clark served as assistant director of GVSU's TRIO/Upward Bound program for nine years and "fell in love with TRIO and its mission." She has worked in GRCC's program for almost a decade.

"I have loved working with GRCC students from the first moment and still love our program and the students we serve," Clark said.

Most of her time is focused on academic advising and preparing students to transfer to four-year institutions. She also helps students interested in GRCC's Study Away program and coordinates MiCUP, GRCC's summer research partnership with Michigan Technological University.

Clark has also developed volunteer opportunities: TRIO students have helped at the Children's Museum, Kids' Food Basket, the Baxter Community Center, and the Ronald McDonald House. They also support a student at the Power of Education Foundation's school in Fontamara, Haiti.

"It has always been my passion to help students widen their worldviews and perspectives through a depth and breadth of new, educational and life experiences they may otherwise miss," she said.

For Clark, supporting the GRCC Foundation is another way to have a direct impact on students.

"I appreciate the work of the foundation and what it means to all our GRCC students," she said. "Being part of the GRCC community and seeing our students persist and forge forward is what gives me hope – I know their potential and the impact they will have in the world!"

WHAT IS TRIO?

TRIO is a set of federally funded programs to support disadvantaged students as they pursue a college degree. It targets "first-generation" students – those whose parents did not earn a bachelor's degree – and students who receive Pell Grants.

GRCC's TRIO/Student Support Services program provides:

-  **Individualized academic planning.**
-  **Career readiness skills.**
-  **Tutoring.**
-  **Volunteer opportunities.**
-  **Summer research opportunities.**
-  **Help with finding internships.**
-  **Assistance with completing the FAFSA.**
-  **Counseling.**

OPENING MORE DOORS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Juan Olivarez's work with foundation to expand college access continues after his GRCC retirement.

Dr. Juan Olivarez forged new community partnerships and increased opportunities for underserved populations during his 10-year tenure as Grand Rapids Community College's eighth president. He has continued that work since stepping down, collaborating with the GRCC Foundation and many other organizations to expand access to higher education.

Olivarez's own story illustrates the life-changing power of learning.

The son of migrant laborers, he enrolled at Aquinas College. Education has been the main focus ever since for both Olivarez and his wife, Mary, whom he met at Aquinas. After earning a teaching degree, he went on to receive a master's degree in educational psychology from Wayne State University and a doctorate in family and child ecology from Michigan State University.

Mary Olivarez earned a teaching certificate and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from MSU and a teaching certificate with an endorsement in early childhood education. She spent most of her 24-year career with Grand Rapids Public Schools, teaching kindergarten, early childhood special education and working with students with multiple impairments. She retired in 2012.

Juan Olivarez began his career as a first-grade teacher in the Grand Rapids school district. He later worked as a school psychologist, special education supervisor and director of curriculum research and development. After 20 years with the school district, he joined GRCC in 1991 as dean of Institutional Research.

When he was selected to lead GRCC in 1999, he became the first Hispanic president of a Michigan college or university.

"Dr. Olivarez worked tirelessly for GRCC students, making sure they are the focus of everything we do," said David Koetje, board of trustees chair. "He built partnerships throughout our community that led to more opportunities for our students and strengthened our region as a whole."

Olivarez guided GRCC in collaborations with surrounding school districts, the health industry, city officials, and area colleges and universities. Enrollment of minority students doubled at GRCC during his decade at the helm.

While president, Olivarez also served as chairman of the GRCC Foundation's board of directors and played a pivotal role in the Open Door campaign. This two-year effort by the foundation raised more than \$10 million for college projects and student scholarships. Both Olivarez and his wife served as honorary co-chairs for the foundation's most recent capital campaign: A Broader Vision, which surpassed its goal and raised

almost \$23 million for scholarships and building renovations in 2019.

After retiring from GRCC in 2008, Olivarez took on other community-facing roles. He became president and CEO of the Kalamazoo Community Foundation before becoming a college president again – this time at his alma mater: Aquinas. He served in that role from 2011 to 2017, and just recently finished his time as the Distinguished Scholar in Residence for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Grand Valley State University's Johnson Center for Philanthropy.

But no matter where his professional journey has taken him, Olivarez continues to support GRCC and its students. He and his wife have established the Olivarez Scholarship Fund, with the goal of supporting students who plan to transfer to a four-year college. They also have a planned gift with the foundation.

"Mary and I have seen first-hand the return on our investment when we give to the GRCC Foundation," said Olivarez, who was named President Emeritus in 2018. "For many students, the ability to have access and attend GRCC has opened many opportunities for well-paying jobs, or to gain entrance into a four-year college or university to achieve their career goals. We will continue to invest in GRCC so more students have access to higher learning, and we encourage others to join us."



JOYCE WISNER'S GENEROSITY SHINES THROUGH ATC'S CONTINUING IMPACT

Joyce Wisner's generosity helped GRCC grow a state-of-the-art facility that is the home to world-famous programs and life-changing opportunities.

Wisner, who passed away July 14 at the age of 91, served as chair of the Tassell-Wisner-Bottrall Foundation. The Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center, 151 Fountain St. NE, was named after her, her husband, Tom Wisner; and their children, David and Michelle Bottrall. Tom Wisner, a Grand Rapids Junior College alumnus, died in 2015. He and Joyce were married for 52 years.

The Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center, which marks its 30th anniversary this year, recently gained a two-story, 18,416-square-foot expansion that includes a new Data Center Lab suite, an expanded and updated Machine Tool Lab, more student study spaces, and a renovated computer lab.

GRCC President Bill Pink showed the college's gratitude for Wisner's generosity by presenting her with an honorary degree on her 88th birthday.

"Joyce Wisner truly cared about GRCC students and our West Michigan community," Pink said. "Students of all ages leave that building with skills that allow them to step right into careers. I'm saddened by her passing, but proud to count her and members of her family as friends, and thrilled her vision will allow us to continue changing lives long into the future."



YOUR LEGACY, THEIR FUTURE

The GRCC Foundation can coordinate with you and your professional advisors to create a lasting impact for our students:

Bequests

This is one of the easiest and most flexible ways that you can leave a gift to the GRCC Foundation.

Options include:

- Percentage bequest – make a gift of a percentage of your estate.
- Specific bequest – make a gift of a specific dollar amount or asset.
- Residuary bequest – make a gift from the balance, or residue, of your estate.

Retirement Assets

You can donate a part or all of your unused retirement assets, such as your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), pension or other tax-deferred plan.

If you designate the GRCC Foundation as a beneficiary, our students will benefit from the full value of your gift because your retirement assets will not be taxed at your death. Your estate will benefit from an estate tax charitable deduction for the gift.

To name the GRCC Foundation as a beneficiary, update your beneficiary designation form through your plan administrator.

Options for designation include:

- Primary beneficiary – GRCC Foundation will receive a percentage or specific amount.
- Contingent beneficiary – GRCC Foundation will receive the balance of your plan if your primary beneficiary doesn't survive you.

Life Insurance

You can designate the GRCC Foundation as the full, partial or contingent beneficiary of your life insurance policy, while still retaining ownership. To make a gift of life insurance, contact your life insurance provider to update your beneficiary designation form.

IRA Charitable Rollover

If you are 70 ½ years or older, you can make a difference now with an IRA Charitable Rollover. You can give up to \$100,000 annually, income tax-free, from your IRA directly to a qualified charity. If you are considering an IRA Charitable Rollover, consult with your professional advisors to ensure that your transfer qualifies.

Contact GRCC Foundation

After creating or updating your will or trust, please contact us to inform us of your plans. We would love to recognize you. For more information, please visit grcc.edu/PlannedGiving.

GRCC RECEIVES LARGEST SINGLE DONATION EVER OF NEARLY \$10 MILLION

Robert Richmond saw first-hand the impact Grand Rapids Community College had on the interns who worked for his company and took steps to make sure that education continued to be accessible to all.

“Mr. Richmond’s vision was to help the college keep higher education within reach of everyone who seeks it,” said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation. “We will use this generous gift to honor his legacy.”

Richmond grew up in the Roscommon area and attended Albion College and the University of Michigan before receiving a business administration degree from Central Michigan University. He and his wife, Lois, started B&L Plastics in Rockford and, later, B&L Development. They frequently hired interns from GRCC.

Family members said Richmond believed strongly in higher education and was impressed with the work performed by the interns who were earning GRCC associate degrees.

GRCC President Bill Pink said Richmond’s donation reflects the value that area employers and residents place on the college and its role in developing a talented workforce and boosting the local economy.

“We deeply appreciate this gift,” Pink said. “Mr. Richmond is a great example of leaving one’s treasure to touch the lives of others for years to come.”

SHARING OUR STORIES



ANA LONGMAN
Current Student, Enrique Fierens Memorial Scholarship
“I was really excited to know that I received the Enrique Fierens Memorial Scholarship and I started crying! This helped me understand that as long as I push for what I want, there is help out there. This will give me the chance to learn what I can, and take it and start my own business. You are never too old to learn something new and expand your horizons and go for your passion.”



CONSUELO POLAND LOCKHART
Welding and Fabrication Certificate, 2013, Founder and Executive Director of the Latinas Welding Guild
“Through my experience at GRCC, I had many doors open up for me and gained the self-confidence to not let industry barriers prevent me from starting a career in a predominantly male-dominated field. I would encourage more women to give welding a chance as a potential career path!”



GIDEON KORTENHOVEN
Associate of Arts in French Studies, 2021, Payne Xenophon Panopoulos Scholarship
“Thank you so much for this opportunity! Sometimes people don’t see the value of being able to communicate outside of your native language, but you clearly do and I appreciate that. This scholarship made it possible to complete community college in a timely manner without too much financial burden – which was priceless.”



MIEKE STOUB
Associate of Arts in Writing and Journalism, 2010, Marketing Director for People First
“When I wanted to start a second career, I knew I couldn’t do it overnight. I went to GRCC part-time for a couple of years before being able to commit to a full-time class load. It felt like it would take forever, but the engaging professors and course content helped the semesters fly by.”



LEE DIEDRICH
Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences in HVAC and Refrigeration Technology, 2021, H.S. Die & Engineering Scholarship
“As with many other families, mine was affected by the 2020 COVID shutdowns. My parents own a construction development business, and not working had a financial impact. Since they cover the majority of my educational expenses, the scholarship helped pay my tuition. I’ve worked hard to make sure I am learning to the full extent of my abilities and that my grades reflect it. So when someone noticed, it felt very good and built my confidence.”



NGUYEN MA
Current student, Plastics Scholarship, Cascade Engineering Scholarship
“I moved to America four years ago, and it means that I have to settle down my life again. My bachelor degree and working experience were not credited in this country, so I had to start going to college again. Working full time and studying is never easy, and exhausting sometimes, but it teaches me to never give up. These scholarships did help me a lot on my academic pathway. I always feel thankful, and the scholarships remind me that I need to work harder every day.”



VERONIKA FREI
Current student, AT&T Aspire Scholarship
“Thank you, GRCC! I cannot tell you how much your generosity helped me. I was able to get ink and paper for my printer, and art supplies for my class. After being temporarily unemployed with no money coming in, I was in a bind. The scholarship made it possible to pay daily bills like groceries, gas, and my phone bill. I am very grateful for your generosity!”



TIM MROZ
Associate of Arts, 1996, Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, The Right Place
“Throughout my career, I have been provided many new opportunities that have taken my career in different directions. I have been able to succeed because GRCC encouraged me to say ‘yes’ to new experiences.”



ANITA HEAVNER
Owner of Taco Boy Donor, Taco Boy Scholarship
“It’s great to give back to the community, and help others fulfill their dreams. Scholarships help people better their lives, and it’s worth the money to educate and create opportunities in your own community.”



ALICE DONAHUE
Retired faculty, GRCC Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
“As a retiree, I saw firsthand the students at GRCC and the challenges they face. They were putting their best foot forward to advance themselves. An education gives people opportunities to pursue their dreams. A scholarship could be the one thing a student needs to complete their degree. That support can be life-changing.”

MAKING A DIFFERENCE DROP BY DROP



Alumnus David Edwards returns to GRCC for groundbreaking study on tool to fight COVID-19.

When Dr. David Edwards needed a Midwest location for a groundbreaking study on an invention that he hoped would slow the spread of COVID-19, it was an easy decision.

After all, his GRCC ties stretch back to childhood: His father, Ronald Edwards, was a chemistry professor at Grand Rapids Junior College. The elder Edwards taught the first nuclear chemistry course offered by a Michigan community college.

"I remember as a little kid coming to the community college and eventually studying there," said David Edwards, who attended GRJC in 1980-81.

He eventually earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Michigan Technological University in 1983 and a doctorate from the Illinois

Institute of Technology in 1987. He taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Pennsylvania State University before co-founding a startup for an inhalable aerosol. After selling that company, he joined Harvard University's John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and taught there for 16 years.

Edwards was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2001, in part for his development of an aerosol drug-delivery system.

In November 2020, Edwards, now CEO of Boston-based Sensory Cloud, sought GRCC's help with the testing of FEND, an over-the-counter nasal saline mist. He started work on the product several years ago in response to threats from anthrax, but he believed it could be effective in halting COVID-19 infection.

"I'm really thrilled to be coming back and to lead this opportunity for this really important hygiene COVID-19

study," he said. "This is about hygiene and how we can lead the cleanest possible lives we can, on campus and off. We're learning a lot about what that means, and there are important breakthroughs all around us."

Edwards spent two days at GRCC, measuring air particles breathed in and out by study volunteers. FEND was named one of the top 100 Inventions of 2020 by Time magazine, which noted study results of people exhaling 75% fewer aerosol particles when they used the spray.

"Dr. Edwards is another example of someone using a GRCC education as the foundation for an amazing career and making a difference in the world during a difficult time," President Bill Pink said. "We are excited to be a part of this study because the safety and wellness of our community is paramount. But it is also inspiring to see how a GRCC graduate is playing a role in battling this pandemic."

"I'm really thrilled to be coming back and to lead this opportunity for this really important hygiene COVID-19 study. This is about hygiene and how we can lead the cleanest possible lives we can, on campus and off. We're learning a lot about what that means, and there are important breakthroughs all around us."

– Dr. David Edwards



GRCC COMMUNITY STEPS UP TO HELP WITH CRUCIAL RESEARCH

Alumnus David Edwards originally started work on FEND, an over-the-counter saline mist, to thwart anthrax, but when the pandemic hit, he believed it could be an effective tool against that threat as well.

Edwards tested his theory with 253 volunteers ages 10 to 70, at GRCC, Cape Cod Academy in Massachusetts, and Bangalore Baptist Hospital in India.

GRCC students, staff, faculty and area residents participated in the research on Nov. 16 and 17, 2020. The study examined two nasal sprays: FEND, comprised of calcium chloride and sodium chloride in distilled water, and Arm & Hammer's Simply Saline, comprised of isotonic sodium chloride. Edwards' theory was that FEND could slow or stop aerosol molecules – and any pollutants or viruses they carry – from entering the nasal passage.

The research examined each person's respiratory droplets before and after FEND or Simply Saline, used as a control, was inhaled. Edwards found that the number of particles declined by up to 99% after FEND was used, while the change in the number of droplets from the isotonic nasal saline spray was statistically insignificant.

"There are four elements of good hygiene," Edwards said. "One is hand sanitizing. The second is, obviously, masks. The third is social distancing, and the fourth now is airway cleansing. All four of those are important. It's like a series of walls we've set up to protect ourselves."

TRANSFORMING LIVES BEGINS WITH YOU

Whether you prefer an automated monthly donation from your bank or credit card, or choose to establish a planned gift, the GRCC Foundation is ready to help.

Your first step: grcc.edu/GRCCFoundation to see the different ways you can give.

Feel free to call us at (616) 234-3939, and we'll answer any questions and help you set up your donation. Or stop by in person at the new Custer Alumni House, 473 E. Fulton St.!



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COMMENCEMENT MULTIPLIES AS IT RETURNS TO FIELDHOUSE

The GRCC Foundation, Student Life and the Alumni Association pulled out all the stops to prepare the Class of 2021 for four commencements!

GRCC provided the almost 500 graduates with options for celebrating their achievements while keeping with social distancing protocols, breaking the traditional one ceremony into four commencements – two for the School of Arts and Sciences and two for the School of Workforce Development – over two days. Graduates and their families also had the option of participating virtually, and all four ceremonies were live-streamed.

A “drive-up” GRADfest in March allowed students to pick up everything they needed for commencement from the safety of their cars. Graduates drove through stations set up in the DeVos Campus parking lot on March 30. In addition to receiving their caps, gowns, tassels and stoles, students were celebrated with cheers from the volunteers staffing the event and had a chance to pose for professional photos with our GRCC letters!

“Every commencement is a celebration, and this one even more so, as students have faced the challenges of a pandemic and emerged stronger,” President Bill Pink said.

COMMENCEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

4	Ceremonies.	119	Graduates participated virtually.
241	Participants in GRADfest.		
1,400	Eligible to graduate.	3,979	Views during live-streaming.
259	Graduates participated in fieldhouse ceremonies.		

JENNA VANDEKAMP JOINS ALUMNI RELATIONS

New development manager brings 8 years of fundraising experience.

Jenna VandeKamp joined the GRCC Foundation in January as development manager-Alumni Relations and Annual Giving.

In her role with the foundation, she connects GRCC and GRJC alumni with their alma mater and helps supporters plan their annual giving.

“I look forward to getting to know many of you and creating fun opportunities for connecting GRJC and GRCC alumni,” she said.

VandeKamp has more than eight years of fundraising experience, most recently as director of development at MOKA, a nonprofit organization that serves West Michigan residents with disabilities. She received a bachelor’s degree in public administration, with a minor in business, from Calvin University.

“We are excited to welcome her to our team,” said Erin Van Egmond, associate director of College Advancement.



TEACHER ELIZABETH USADEL FINDS AN ART TO CREATING BUSINESS

Elizabeth Usadel immersed herself in art at GRCC, and that passion has sparked not one, but two careers.

She studied Visual Arts at GRCC, earning an associate degree in 2004. She then earned a bachelor’s in K-12 art education and a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction, both from Calvin University. She has spent the past 14 years as an art teacher, with the East Grand Rapids, Northview and, currently, the Godfrey-Lee school districts.

In 2019, she began making polymer clay earrings and realized quickly that she wanted to turn this hobby into a business. She opened a store – The Color Forest – at 341 S. Division Ave., where she sells her jewelry and runs workshops.

“I love getting to combine my love of color and making things with my teaching background,” she said. “Each workshop is like a little art party.”

The Color Forest is one of the more than 30 enterprises you can find on GRCC’s list of alumni-owned businesses.

“Our goal is to encourage and empower women with our bright and fun jewelry,” Usadel said. “I hope to make my business my full-time employment. I’d like to hire a small team in the next five years and eventually become a national brand.”

Usadel credits GRCC with giving her skills that have helped with both her careers.

“My path to starting my business was unconventional,” she said. “I am an art teacher who found a reignited passion for making things. The support I felt at GRCC helped give me the confidence to take a risk and try something new.”

RAIDERS SUPPORTING RAIDERS

GRCC proudly supports alumni-owned businesses – and we’ve set up a way so you can, too!

You can find a list by entering “alumni-owned business” in the search bar atop the grcc.edu website. From beer to jewelry to consultants to nonprofits – we have alumni in all types of ventures. Do you want to add your business to the list? There’s a link for that on the webpage.

Raiders supporting Raiders – what could be better than that?

STAY CONNECTED!



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Extend your networking – follow our LinkedIn page! [linkedin.com/School/Grand-Rapids-Community-College](https://www.linkedin.com/School/Grand-Rapids-Community-College)

KEEP IN TOUCH

Help us keep all our GRCC and GRJC alumni connected to the latest news and events!

Just visit grcc.edu/Alumni and click on “update contact information” and let us know the best way to stay in touch!

SCHOLARFEST HONORS DAVE AND KAREN CUSTER

“Caring and commitment.” “Positive, humble and transparent.” The warmth of the accolades let the sunshine in as the GRCC Foundation held its first virtual SCHOLARfest in honor of Dave and Karen Custer.

The Sept. 29 presentation came to viewers live from the “college’s living room,” as Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation, described the new Custer Alumni House. The refurbished building houses the GRCC Foundation and alumni activities, and the SCHOLARfest honoring the Custers was its debut.

Mullins led a tribute to the couple, featuring memories from their three sons – Scott, Mark and Todd – as well as video tributes from Bill Prescott, Joe Hesse, Jim Hackett, Mary Tolsma and Juan Olivarez.

Dave Custer, CEO and founder of Custer Inc., talked about his first date with Karen: a Fifth Dimension concert in 1969. Local musicians Steffan Copenhaver, Sean Copenhaver, Craig Avery, Ryan Goldner and Joe Cisler helped recreate the magical moment with a special remix of “Let the Sunshine In.”

It was easy to get swept away by nostalgia, but GRJC alumnus Dave Custer kept a focus on the event’s purpose: \$140,000 was raised for scholarships.

“I don’t know what we’d do as a community without this college,” he said. “Every year it gives people like me their start, and that’s worth supporting.”



CREATING CONNECTIONS SETS NEW ATTENDANCE RECORD

Special musical performance by Shades of Blue shares the love, showcases GRCC creativity.

Collaboration met creativity, with different departments coming together to provide a sweet Valentine’s Day surprise.

The GRCC Foundation’s annual Creating Connections breakfast traditionally brings scholarship “owners” together with the recipients near Valentine’s Day. With the pandemic putting a halt on in-person gatherings, GRCC staff and students still found a way to show our love and appreciation to donors.

The foundation worked with the Music and Media Technology departments and shared a special Valentine’s Day performance of GRCC’s Shades of Blue vocal jazz ensemble. Donors enjoyed “Love Walked In” by George and Ira Gershwin through their email and could also see it on the foundation’s Facebook page.

“While 2020 presented many challenges, we have adapted,” said professor Jed Scott, director of Shades of Blue. “A normal year is spent working on intricate, challenging music and learning to work cohesively as an ensemble to deliver performances that are in a true jazz aesthetic – reacting in the moment to the music. It’s a labor of love!”

Scott and many other faculty members found innovative ways to teach remotely. In Scott’s case, he discovered the transition allowed some students to participate from far away. One Shades of Blue member, a professional touring guitarist, started the semester in the Ukraine and is now in New York.

“Love Walked In” was among the ensemble’s most challenging recordings. Students were provided a keyboard demonstration lined up to a video of Scott conducting. They followed a video of a classmate singing, listening on headphones while singing their parts into their cell phone microphones. The Media Technologies team then added visuals to bring this performance to life. Check out the final result at grcc.edu/Valentine!

STUDENTS SHARE IMPACT OF SCHOLARSHIPS THEY RECEIVED

Urgent car repairs, more practice time, a boost in confidence.

These are just a few of the ways that GRCC Foundation scholarships have helped students Anthony Clark Jr., Beatris Lopez, Nicko’s Rosser and Mei Lin Wooden at critical points in their education journeys.

They discussed their experiences and aspirations during a June 16 virtual conversation led by Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation.

Three of the four students were returning to college: Clark enrolled and left GRCC a few times before finding success in the journalism program. Lopez was in the nursing program at another institution before temporarily switching to education and then deciding to ultimately pursue her dream of a health care career at GRCC. Rosser earned a master’s

degree in health and wellness and now wants a career in law enforcement.

All four are paying for college out of their own pockets. Rosser has a full-time job in addition to his studies, while Lopez is a first-generation college student who is also mother to a 5-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter. Clark, who is also a first-generation student, lives with his two younger brothers. Wooden, who received her associate degree in Music Education in spring 2021, runs a piano studio and a photography business.

It all can be a precarious balance: Clark’s scholarship arrived just as he began having car troubles. Wooden said the scholarships she received allowed her to fit in her daily four-hour piano practices around the eight classes she took during her final semester at GRCC.

They agreed that their scholarships have been life-changing.

“I found so many amazing people that have supported me and that have me feeling like I can do this,” Lopez said. “It’s not impossible – I just need to put the time and the effort in.”

500 Club welcomes 7 new members; Armen Oumedian consecutive giving awards celebrated

The GRCC Foundation added seven members to the 500 Club and celebrated consecutive giving with food truck fare at the Custer Alumni House.

The Armen Oumedian Consecutive Giving Award, launched last year, went to GRCC retiree Robert Long and current employee Robert Cebelak.

Long, a former faculty member for Biological Sciences and a 1990 Excellence in Education Award recipient, has donated to the scholarship fund he established in his sister’s memory for 34 years. The Gayle E. Long Scholarship helps single parents who are carrying no more than 11 credit hours per semester, with students enrolled in health curriculums given first consideration.

Cebelak, who joined GRCC as a physics instructor in 1983, has supported the Physics and Engineering Scholarship for 34 consecutive years.



NEW TO THE 500 CLUB THIS YEAR

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Amy Bennett | Benjamin Smith |
| Audrey Heckwolf | Kim Squiers |
| Angela Salinas | Rebecca Yoder |
| Dana Sammons | |



LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF COLLEGE ADVANCEMENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GRCC FOUNDATION

We are seeing more people on campus as West Michigan emerges from the pandemic, and it's wonderful to make those connections once more! We'll never again take for granted the opportunity for a friendly hug or seeing a smile in person. There's a warmth that can't be conveyed as well through an email or video link.

Even though we could not be together in person, I'll always be grateful that you stayed connected with the Grand Rapids Community College Foundation during these turbulent times.

We couldn't see many of our students this past year, but we know their challenges increased, with many experiencing housing and food insecurity, lost jobs, and other obstacles.

Your support helped us address these concerns. The GRCC Foundation again was able to award more than \$1.3 million in scholarships to help students along their educational journey. The ability to overcome financial challenges will change the course of these lives and, in many cases, the lives of their family members.

Your continued assistance also allowed GRCC to renovate and expand facilities to better serve our students. The new GRCC Lakeshore Campus in Holland Township opened this summer and will make a college education more accessible, helping people take advantage of life-changing opportunities. Changes to the historic Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall will better link students

with support services, helping them realize we are on this journey together.

This year, we also lost some giants – people who have, for years, strengthened our college and, in turn, our community. Peter Secchia, Bob Woodrick, and Joyce Wisner supported students through this foundation for many years. Their legacies will long be remembered, and reflected in the students who benefited from their generosity.

I am excited about our future. Together, we have faced challenges no one could have foreseen. Many things have changed in our new world, but one thing that remains constant is your support for our students and this college. You made a difference in many lives when it was needed most.

We still have much to do as we recover. More students than ever need assistance. I deeply appreciate your continued support.

With gratitude,

Kathryn K. Mullins, Ed.D.
Vice President of College Advancement and
Executive Director of the GRCC Foundation



Foundation Statement of Financial Position

	2021	2020
ASSETS (as of June 30)		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 4,578,042	\$ 11,416,283
Contributions receivable — net of allowance for uncollectible pledges of \$0 at June 30, 2020 and June 30, 2019	\$ 3,760,693	\$ 4,869,477
Accrued interest receivable	\$ 76,566	\$ 78,568
Investments	\$ 38,205,264	\$ 29,478,115
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 46,620,565	\$ 45,842,443
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (as of June 30)		
Liabilities:		
Scholarships payable	\$ 649,944	\$ 599,758
Accounts payable	\$ 900,369	\$ 133,941
Grants payable	\$ 146,031	\$ 126,677
Funds held on behalf of others	\$ 2,915,027	\$ 1,500,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 4,611,371	\$ 2,360,376
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	\$ 8,242,127	\$ 13,536,907
With donor restrictions	\$ 33,767,067	\$ 29,945,160
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 42,009,194	\$ 43,482,067
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 46,620,565	\$ 45,842,443

It is the mission of the GRCC Foundation to secure and manage financial gifts to support and promote student, employee and community learning, enabling the college to fulfill its mission and vision.



GO GREEN!

You can receive future GRCC Foundation annual reports online –

with the same stories of our students, our events and our efforts as in the print version.

If you want to “go green” and receive the electronic version in future years, please go to

grcc.edu/ContactUpdate

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