AWARD PRESENTATION 2:00 P.M.

PROGRAM

EMCEE & WELCOME
Christina Arnold
Director, Bob & Aleicia Woodrick Diversity Learning Center

INTRODUCTION OF RECIPIENTS
Steven C. Ender, Ed.D.
President

SALUTE TO WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donald M. MacKenzie
Associate Vice President, College Advancement

MICHIGAN WOMEN’S HISTORY

1702 Marie-Therese Cayou Cadillac and Anne Poite de Belem de Tonni join their husbands at Fort Pontchartrain (Detroit), becoming the first two European women settlers in Michigan.

1832 Laura Smith Haviland and Elizabeth mugnet Chandler founded the Logan Female Anti-Slavery Society in Lenawee County, the first women’s anti-slavery society in the Michigan territory, leading to one of the first Michigan stations of the Underground Railroad to Canada.

1851 Sejmester Truth of Battle Creek speaks before the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio.

1852 The first woman’s club in Michigan, the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo, is founded, by Lucinda Hinkle-Stone.

1855 The first college for women in Michigan, the Michigan Female College, is founded in Lansing by Abigail Rogers.

1860 The new's first bill on women's suffrage is defeated by one vote.

1867 The Michigan legislature grants women taxpayers the right to vote for school trustees, but rejects total women’s suffrage.

1870 Madeline Louise Steckel of Albion is the first woman admitted to the University of Michigan, the first university to admit women.

1872 Frances Armstrong Rathfon of Grand Rapids, Ruth Gay, and Sibila Baker are the first women physicians to be admitted to the Michigan State Medical Society.

1898 Ellen Mary Towner of Byron is the first U.S. Army nurse to die on foreign soil of typhoid fever in Puerto Rico during the Spanish American War, and the first woman to receive a military funeral in Michigan.

1900 Alice Cheney of Detroit is the first woman to be licensed as a ship’s captain on the Great Lakes.

1908 The first woman’s curling club in the country, the Grand Rapids Women’s Curling Club, is formed.

1911 Harriet Quimby of Bunch Country is the first woman in the nation (second in the world) to receive a pilot’s license.

1913 Michigan women can vote for state offices for the first time.

1921 Eva McCall Harland of Grand Rapids is the first woman to serve in the Michigan Legislature with her election to the Michigan Senate.

1926 Dr. Grace Eldering and Dr. Pearl Kendrick of Grand Rapids develop the first successful vaccine for whooping cough. They later develop the single inoculation for diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus.

1941 Lila M. Neasmielt of Dearborn is the first woman to be a circuit court judge in Michigan, serving on the Wayne County Circuit Court.

1966 Women Hillary of Grand Rapids and Kay Whited of Flint are the first women to become Michigan State Police Troopers.

1971 The Women’s Crisis Center is founded in Ann Arbor, one of the first two rape crisis centers in the nation.

1978 Margaret Brewer of Detroit is the first woman to be a general in the U.S. Marine Corps.

1986 Catherine Comet is the first woman in the country to be the conductor of a professional orchestra, the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra.

1991 Maluma Rathbone Niedy of Detroit is the first U.S. Army woman to be a prisoner of war in the Persian Gulf War.

1994 Carolyn S. Miller of Macomb County is the first woman elected as Michigan Secretary of State.

1995 The first publicly-funded domestic violence shelter in the country is founded in Ann Arbor, with Stan McGee as its executive director.

2003 Jennifer Granholm is inaugurated as the first woman Governor of the State of Michigan.

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION TEAM

Christina Arnold, Chair
Noah DeSmit
Phillip Green
Emily Nisley
Kathleen Owens
Jennifer Smith

REFLECTIONS

In February of 1980, President Jimmy Carter declared by proclamation that a week be set aside as National Women’s History Week. In his declaration he noted that women’s achievements were too often overlooked and unsung. “But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America were as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well.” The week blossomed into a month of observation with GRCC instituting the Salute to Women Awards in 1999. The awards, in keeping with the now international remembrance movement, GRCC names women chosen to represent the contributions of all of the women of the College, whose vision, leadership and courage continues to shape the history and the future of the college.

Each year, the honored women represent four GRCC categories, Alumna, Employee, Student and Former Employee. The women are nominated as exemplary examples of achievement in her profession, positive impact, leadership and as agents of change.
A Woman of Determination and Leadership

“The thing I think goes well with GRCC is that the personal connection I feel with the students.” Kathy Mullins reflects, “because we see myself in them, they are me and I them.” As she recalls her youth, college was not an option; never a consideration, you got married and worked. It was the closing of the factory where she was employed that opened up an unexpected alternative. “The Michigan Works advisor simply offered college as one of a couple of possible uses of the government resources available,” Kathy explains. “Until that moment I had never considered higher education. No one in my family had gone on past high school.”

After she received her AA degree from Baker College, she was urged toward a BA. Once hired by GRCC, she was pressured by mentors and colleagues within the College to complete her MBA in Leadership Studies. “The Michigan Works employee had no idea of the impact that new vision of myself had for me. I have now completed a doctorate! People saw more in me than I acknowledged and I imagine that is true for so many of our students, whether they are from high school or returning as adults with additional family responsibilities.” She says her responsibility to those students as an effort to remove obstacles and barriers to their learning and their academic success wherever she can.

Several nominating narratives noted the varied and often complex aspects of her current position at the college as point person for the President with K-12 partners, the local community, businesses and legislators. “Managing the often competing interests requires grace and a strict work ethic; Kathy possesses both of these traits.” Another wrote, “She maintains a delicate balance always in situations that demand skillful arbitration, attention to detail, and political savvy.”

A Woman of Accomplishment and Inspiration

Teresa Weatherall Neal began her long career with Grand Rapids Public Schools as a teenager and student employee. Her story is one of connection and continuity, from student worker to Administrative Assistant then to Coordinator of Compliance, Assistant Superintendent of Community and Student Affairs and finally culminating as Superintendent of Grand Rapids Public Schools. “I have lived this district for many, many years,” says Teresa. “My K-12 experience with GRPS, I’ve never wanted to leave. I didn’t plan for this position as Superintendent, but I was ready when it happened…It’s been a calling.” (GR Times, 9/16/12)

Teresa had already started her family when her sister encouraged her to return to school. “GRCC turned out to be an easy transition because I never felt alone. Of course, my sister was there but so were many others, counselors and faculty and staff. It was such a supportive environment. It is what I want for all of our GRPS students…not to feel alone and to always feel encouraged.” She received an AA degree from GRCC followed by a BS in Public Administration from GVSSU and an MA from WMU in Educational Leadership. “I constantly encourage everyone around me to return to school, especially women. Often we don’t know what we are capable of until we take the step.”

Leading a system with nearly 18,000 students and 4,000 employees demands a variety of skills and strength. A narrator wrote, “She is a bold and courageous community leader, a listener, a collaborator, and one of our community’s own as she drives fundamental and extensive change.” Another noted, “It is truly her integrity, honesty and credibility that has given our city’s parents and students the faith to believe in the decisions she is making.”

Teresa herself says, “We only exist because parents allow us to teach their children. It is a great responsibility for all of us to embrace.” (WOOD, 12/13/12)

A Woman of Compassion and Dedication

As Nicole Bowl recalls, “When I first came to GRCC, directly out of high school, it was really to stay on my parent’s insurance. I had no idea what I wanted to do and the results were predictable!” Now a student ready to graduate and move on to Ferris State University this summer, much has changed for Nicole. “I am a mother now, and I have new responsibilities to my daughter. I know I need a degree and I am prepared to work hard and be successful.” Since returning to GRCC, Nicole has been on both the Dean’s List or the President’s List every semester. As one nominator wrote, “She returned to school as a student who has clear goals…she is very focused, motivated, and keenly devoted to accomplishing her goals.”

Nicole credits the support and resources that she accesses at GRCC with significantly contributing to her academic success. “My daughter is safe and happy at the preschool, which in turn, makes being a student easier for me. I have found so much encouragement from my counselor and from the phenomenal Criminal Justice faculty. They create opportunities for open discussion that are safe and challenging.” The faulty nominators also are impressed with Nicole’s academic performance. “She is a dedicated student who is able to juggle competing demands and in out of the classroom…she is able to apply subject matter to current events and identify the core issues.”

Nicole has found great personal satisfaction from her internship at Depuy Ministries. “I love listening to all of the clients’ stories! Everyone has something so important to say, and every life story is different and never to be heard.” This eagerness and keen interest in the individual has impressed Depuy staff. “She is hugely friendly and maintains beautiful and appropriate relationships with our patrons.”

A Woman of Reason and Reflection

“I felt welcomed as a student at GRCC (GRCC) and welcomed back as I joined faculty some years later,” Beth Foster taught in the Life Sciences Biology Department for over 30 years. She had attended and graduated from GRCC, then GRJC, transferring to the University of Michigan for her BS and MS degrees. “I was so well prepared and advised by the faculty that my move to Michigan was smooth.” Yet, there were some barriers to break, she recalls, during her teaching career at GRCC. At that time, women were informed that they could not be listed as “head of household” and carry their spouses on their insurance. “My husband returned from military service and returned to school. We wanted insurance coverage and I pursued the college through the grievance procedures and as a result, that policy was overturned. At that time it was also understood that women would not continue working past their fifth month of pregnancy. I simply kept on working. It was as if they felt pregnancy was an ’avoidable illness.’”

Multiple nominating narratives for some of the influences Beth had on both her students and her colleagues as well. “Her dedication helped many dentists, nurses, doctors and researchers in their preparation for careers in this community.” Another reads, “As a lab technician, Beth encouraged and mentored me and 13 years later, I once my start and love of teaching to her.” Another reflects, “She truly served to inspire young females in her tenure by her ambition and professionalism.”

A recurring theme throughout the nominating narratives was the strength and depth of being Beth’s friend. “Beth is one of those people who will be a friend for a lifetime. One may not see her every week or talk with her every day, but with Beth, a person can pick up the thread and keep weaving the story anytime.”

GRCC EMPLOYEE HONOREES:

- 2013: Meyr Michelle Anderson
- 2012: Nancy Forrest
- 2011: Pam Maruma
- 2010: Fatima Nieves
- 2009: Tina House
- 2008: Liz Timmer
- 2007: Marvela Mohamed
- 2006: Greetu Croom

GRCC ALUMNA HONOREES:

- 2013: Myrna P. Goodman, A.D.N.
- 2012: Jane Doyle
- 2011: Anika Smith
- 2010: Bonnie K. Miller
- 2009: LaTasha Taylor
- 2008: Dawnill Gillums
- 2007: Amina Hameed
- 2006: Oliva Mango Anderson

GRCC STUDENT HONOREES:

- 2013: Carly Mouch
- 2012: Torina Lejoy
- 2011: Sharron Woodall
- 2010: Desiree Whalsh
- 2009: Fonda Kingrey
- 2008: Mary Anderson
- 2007: Lani Allen
- 2006: Yumiko Bowers

GRCC FORMER EMPLOYEE HONOREES:

- 2013: June C. Berends, R.N., Ph. D.
- 2012: Julie Johnson
- 2011: Not Awarded
- 2010: Rosalba Girsh
- 2009: LaToya Tisher
- 2008: Patricia Oldt, Ph.D.

SALUTE TO WOMEN AWARD RECEPTION

MARCH 25, 2014 • 1:30 TO 3:00 PM • WISNER-BOTTRALL APPLIED TECHNOLOGY CENTER