

New Phyllis Fratzke Early Childhood Learning Laboratory is Open



Our new preschool building on campus is open! The Early Childhood Learning Laboratory (ECLL) officially opened its doors on January 9. The children were incredibly excited to explore and occupy their new space. Members of the community had a chance to visit the ECLL during an open house for the ribbon cutting on Saturday, January 21. The open house was well attended. Phyllis Fratzke for whom

the building was named after, was the guest speaker. She was integral in starting the Early Childhood Program at GRCC. We look forward to exploring all the ways the ECLL can be involved with community in the future.

Notes from Tricia Siegel



Thank you for reading our spring newsletter. It is always hard to believe another academic school year is coming to a close.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter valuable and informative. I am always looking for new ideas or suggestions for future issues. Please feel free to email me at tsiegel@grcc.edu.

If you are graduating this spring, please know that the staff in our department will be just as excited as you are to see you walk across that stage. We have such a feeling of pride when we see our students complete their goals. We are celebrating with you!



Creating Connections Breakfast



On Thursday, February 16, recipients of the T.O.T. Scholarships were invited to a breakfast to meet with various donors who contribute and support the scholarships. The students were able to network with local business owners, GRCC board members and Trustees as well as GRCC faculty. It was a wonderful chance to celebrate scholarship winners and create connections.

Teachers of Tomorrow Scholarship

If you have not had a chance to complete the application for a scholarship, you have until 5 p.m. on **March 15**. The website is grcc.edu/educationscholarships.

GRCC has a partnership with Ferris State University



Ferris is located right on our campus in the Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center (ATC)

Our Child Development and Education Program works closely with Ferris and many of our students transfer there. Ferris offers the 3:1 program for Elementary Teachers. The following is from the Ferris website:

The Elementary Education Program requires the completion of two elementary education minors giving students a broad academic base in language arts, math or science. Students may add a third minor for Early Childhood to add the ZS endorsement to their certification. The professional education courses include field-based experiences supervised by instructional teams comprised of teacher educators, professors from the content area disciplines and expert K-8 teachers.

If you are interested in knowing more about this program, please contact our education department or any of our faculty and we can help you learn more.

Focus on Students – Joshua Johnson



My name is Joshua Johnson. I am 26 years old and this is my second year attending GRCC for my degree in early childhood development. Before attending college, I did six years in the military as an aviation electrician technician for the Marine Corps. When I was around 10 years old I tended to play outdoors with kids much younger than me because they had bigger imaginations than those in my peer group so there was more fun to be had. As I grew older I was

given more responsibility to watch the babies and toddlers of my family. I loved it because they would say and do the funniest things. As a young adult and now as an adult, I had a knack with children. The children of my friends would cling to me like a human magnet. Interacting with them was always a joy and I was constantly complimented by parents on how well I connected with children. Over time and after every interaction with kids, it became increasingly clear to me that what I needed to do was to teach.

My goal in the field of early childhood development is to first and foremost get all the education I can get starting with my associates degree. During and after that I want to work in a child care center. I would like to continue my education in childhood development as I work so that one day I can become a director of a center. My other alternative goal, if not being a director, would be to work at a preschool, [and] after some time, at a child care center.

I know it is hard to believe, but even before I joined the military I knew I wanted to work with children. A lot of people didn't believe me when I would say it and only would believe it when I interacted with kids. To convince people is not with words but with actions. So that is what I am doing. Going to school and soaking up the experiences of the professors and in my lab settings to be that model for the future of the world.

Suicide Information Seminar

On February 15, the Teachers of Tomorrow Seminar featured guest speaker, Hilda Martinez-Gutierrez. Hilda presented information from the Question, Persuade, Refer Institute to over 30 students. Some of the facts she presented were difficult but important to hear:

- 44,193 Americans took their own lives in 2015 (one person every 11.9 minutes commits suicide)
- 1,104,825 annual attempts (one attempt every 29 seconds)
- Suicide is the second-leading cause among youth, ages 15 to 24
- Feelings of hopelessness was a key predictor of risk

(These statistics were provided by American Association of Suicidology, suicidology.org, December 2016.)

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts about suicide contact National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, (800) 273-8255 or the GRCC Counseling Center on the third floor of the Student Center (616) 234-3900.

Meet our Faculty – Deb Vilmont



I cannot believe this is my 25th year working here at GRCC! I have now spent half of my life working with students in the Education and Child Development Program. I earned my Associate's Degree in Child Development from this college and then went on to earn my bachelor's in Family Studies from Central Michigan University and my master's degree in Early Childhood from Western Michigan University. I started working here at GRCC in our Laboratory Preschool program in the four-year-old classroom. Early in my career it was amazing to watch young children learn and discover new things, but it is just as exciting to watch new teachers gain confidence in their skills.

I feel so blessed ever day to have the opportunity to mentor and develop relationships with so many bright and energetic future teachers. Please know that I do not take my responsibility lightly and I always try to keep in mind that how I model myself as your teacher may influence the type of teacher you become. I teach with the following quote in mind:

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."
—Henry Brooks Adams

I appreciate all of you. Thank you for allowing me to be a witness and guide on your journey!

Teacher Education Seminar

Our next Teachers of Tomorrow Seminar will be held on March 22 at 1:30 p.m. We will be in Cook Hall, Room 431. Our guest speaker will be **Dave Kampfschulte**. He is well known for his presentations on "How to Hear What Is Not Being Said." Dave will lead a workshop that facilitates communication, self-reflection and personal growth. His workshop will be interactive and fast-paced. If you are able to join us, the seminars are open to everyone at the college. We look forward to seeing you there.

Summer Course Offerings

Summer is a wonderful time to complete some course work. This may help lighten the load in the fall or catch up from previous semesters. The Child Development and Education Department is offering the following courses for summer 2017: CD 105, CD 107, CD 109, CD 118, CD 180, CD 209, CD 229, CD 280, CD 285 and ED 200. Our department looks forward to working with you this summer.

Visit grcc.edu/educationdepartment/courseofferings for course descriptions.