AT-A-GLANCE

- Assets: $37 million
- Total Funds: 536
- Contributions: $2.1 million
- Donors: 544
- Students Awarded: 1,642
- Scholarships Awarded: $1.3 million

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 Letter: From the Interim President and Foundation Board Chair
3 Our Thanks: to Dr. Bill Pink
4 Tributes: Edward “Ted” Frey and Beverly Drake
5 New: Board of Directors Excellence Scholarship
6 Legacy: Secchia Piazza
8 Food for Thought: Steven Couch
10 Enduring Ties: Cope Family Scholarship
12 Dream Come True: Fabiola Carrillo Ewarza
13 New Scholarships
14 Making It Personal: Christina and Michael Rosloniec
15 Strong Return: Creating Connections
16 Strengthening the Lakeshore: Jim and Donna Brooks
17 Leaving Your Legacy
18 Sharing Our Stories
20 Alumni Happenings
21 Young Alumni Award: Trimell Hawkins
22 Alumni Connections
24 Stay Connected
25 Years in the Making: Ron Moore
26 Giving in Action
28 Our Thanks: From Vice President of College Advancement and GRCC Foundation Executive Director
29 Statement of Financial Position
We all go through periods of transition, as we move from one time or place to another. Hopefully we learn as we go, becoming better and stronger as we step forward. That’s certainly been the case for Grand Rapids Community College this past year.

We are emerging from the pandemic with new approaches, and heightened awareness of challenges faced by our students and our greater community. The ‘normal’ we once knew has given way to the ‘new normal’ we find ourselves in today.

The temptation is to look at the past as the good old days. At GRCC we look back at our distant and recent history and can be proud, because those times are the foundation on which we build our future.

But transitions are also times for reflection. Are we headed in the right direction? Are we serving our community the best way we can? Are we doing what needs to be done, or are we doing what is comfortable?

We are emerging from very difficult times as a college, a community and a nation. We have learned through these times that we are resilient, flexible and able to meet the changing needs of our West Michigan residents and employers.

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strengthened community
by work on Frey, GRCC
Foundation boards

Alumnus Edward “Ted” Frey Jr. contributed both his time and resources to GRCC’s life-changing mission for many years before his death at age 77 in April 2022.

Frey was treasurer and secretary of his family’s Frey Foundation, which made its first donation to GRJC in 1974, the year it was established. Since then, the foundation and GRCC have collaborated on early childhood education projects, capital campaigns and the renovation of the Albert P. Smith Music Center.

Ted Frey served on the GRCC Foundation board of directors from 1992 to 2001, and the Frey Foundation was honored during the college’s Scholarfest in 2015.

“Ted was a proud GRJC alumnus and foundation board member who knew how a community college education can change lives and wanted to make sure others had opportunities to attend,” said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation.

Drake was the executive director of Area Community Services Employment and Training from 1985 to 2011. The organization creates opportunities for self-sufficiency for low-income, economically disadvantaged, disabled, unemployed and underemployed people and dislocated workers.

“I like to think that I was able to open doors for people and to help others because I had been helped,” said Drake, who was named GRCC’s Distinguished Alumna in 1995.

“Bev was such a phenomenal person,” said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation. “She devoted her life to helping others, caring deeply about helping people overcome obstacles to success, especially through education – and GRCC.”

The new Board of Directors Excellence Scholarship allows two students – one each from Kent and Ottawa counties – to attend GRCC tuition-free. The first recipients, nominated by their high school counselors, were Gabriel Gloria and Sophia Vincent.

“Foundation board members are always moved when they hear students sharing how a scholarship helped them overcome financial challenges and move forward with a life-changing education,” said Dr. Kathyn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation. “We’re proud to offer this new opportunity and work with counselors in schools across our region.”

The scholarship pays both tuition and fees associated with registered classes. If other grants or scholarships are already covering those costs, $1,500 will be awarded each semester to cover books, transportation and other education-related expenses.

Vincent, from Caledonia High School, is majoring in early childhood education.

Gloria, from Jenison High School, is studying finance and business administration at GRCC. For him, the new scholarship is key to keeping his college experience debt-free.

“Even though tuition at GRCC is a bargain, many students still need help,” said Buzitta, a Grand Rapids Junior College alumnus. “I’m proud of what the GRCC Foundation has done, but we will continue to work to make sure we can provide funding to all students who want to attend.”

Vincent, from Caledonia High School, is majoring in early childhood education.

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“I’m humbled and appreciative of the fact that my high school counselor felt that I was deserving of this prestige award,” said Gloria, who plans to continue working part time at Meijer.

“I was extremely excited and blown away by the generosity of this scholarship and what it will provide.”
LEAVING A LEGACY

SECCHIA PIAZZA LINKS WEST MICHIGAN WITH THE CULINARY WORLD

The story of Secchia Institute for Culinary Education students bringing the world to West Michigan.

Grand Rapids Community College’s world-class teaching culinary program has gained a new piazza allowing it to serve more guests and share the story of students’ journeys from Secchia Institute for Culinary Education to destinations around the globe.

The new Secchia Piazza is a gift from the late Peter Secchia and his family, whose generosity and drive for excellence helped the Secchia Institute create state-of-the-art facilities, attract top faculty members and prepare students for rewarding careers in the hospitality industry.

The Secchia Piazza is located in GRCC’s Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center, 151 Fountain St. NE and will be used by GRCC students, faculty and staff, and the greater community as an event space and a place to come to reflect and connect to the Secchia Institute.

Designed by Progressive AE, the renovations will enclose an underused outdoor patio, and add a 31-foot-wide, 15-foot-tall, colorful “SkyCone” that already has become one of the college’s most recognizable features. Granger Construction is overseeing the project.

A tondo – a round floor pattern – designed by GRCC Communications Department designers will evoke the educational pathway students take from the Secchia Institute to culinary opportunities across the country and around the world.

GRCC’s culinary program was renamed after Secchia and his wife, Joan, in 2007. The Pietro and Regina Amphitheater, named after Peter Secchia’s grandparents, was added in 2012. Peter’s Pub was launched in 2016 as part of GRCC’s Fountain Hill Brewery, tapping into the demand created by Grand Rapids’ growing craft beer industry.

“The Secchia Institute for Culinary Education has long been recognized as one of Grand Rapids’ best teaching and dining experiences, and Peter Secchia always believed our students are capable of great things,” said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president for College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation.

“These additions will create a beautiful setting to tell the story of the Secchia Institute and the opportunities it creates for students.”

PETER SECCHIA’S FINAL PROJECT SHINES BRIGHT

Some interesting facts about the unique Secchia Piazza:

• Work started in October 2021.
• An underused outdoor patio has been enclosed with oversize glass doors that can be opened in nice weather.
• The central feature is a “SkyCone” that’s 31 feet wide and 15 feet tall with 20 glass panels in seven shades of oranges, yellows and greens.
• Under the SkyCone is a tondo, a round floor pattern designed by GRCC designers. Concrete was pumped up two stories, then the floor cured for 28 days before it was smoothed and polished with diamond-coated grinders. The color was added last.
• The Heritage restaurant was also renovated and connects to the piazza.
• It was named one of WOOD TV’s 10 projects changing the Grand Rapids area in 2022.

“This new space reflects the accomplishments of the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education and the pride Peter Secchia had in our students.” – Dr. Kathryn Mullins
Food for Thought

Foundation scholarship helps Steven Couch pursue ‘purposeful decisions’.

Steven Couch’s lessons at GRCC’s Secchia Institute for Culinary Education prepared him for a career at the stove ... and in front of a TV camera ... and in an office.

Couch came to Grand Rapids with a bachelor’s degree in dietetics from Michigan State University after a year working with AmeriCorps. He wanted to combine what he’d learned at MSU – preventing chronic disease through nutrition – with the culinary arts.

“Even though my whole adult life I have loved food and nutrition, which is why I studied dietetics at MSU, it wasn’t until I learned to apply that knowledge to food cookery and presentation, inspired by the unique and world-class chef instructors, that I found my true calling as an entrepreneur and chef,” he said.

With help from a GRCC Foundation scholarship, Couch could take advantage of unique opportunities in the culinary program.

“When I got the Amway hotel scholarship – I applied for it and got it – it was 2,500 more reasons why I was able to achieve my dream,” he said.

“And it wasn’t about the money, it was about ‘how I can do the things that I’m really supposed to do – I can make purposeful decisions.’”

Couch was one of seven students selected to compete in the World Culinary Grand Prix in Glasgow, Scotland. The competition, sponsored by the World Association of Chefs Societies, features six teams from around the globe preparing and serving a three-course meal. Chef Angus Campbell, now retired from GRCC, coached the Secchia students.

Couch counts Campbell as one of the greatest influences on his career.

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“He said he was impressed with my ability to deliver both hospitality and care in business relationships and wanted to bring that skillset into his firm,” Couch said. “Four months later, I relocated to Los Angeles, moved into his ‘startup house’ and became employee No. 1 at BIM Designs Inc.”

During his nearly five years with the company, he served in positions ranging from project manager to account executive to head of sales and marketing, helped generate $13 million in revenue and opened three offices nationwide. The company now has more than 60 employees in 10 states.

Couch started this year with another career shift, returning as president of Mr. Eat Right and launching Venture Valley Consulting, a business development firm. He doesn’t plan to stop trying new things or saying “yes” when an opportunity comes along.

“I believe you can lead a horse to water, but it’s his thirst on the inside that makes him drink the water on the outside,” he said. “And it’s never too late to develop a thirst for life!”
Laurie Cope Grand’s scholarship honors her family of GRCC alumni.

Laurie Cope Grand followed in her older brother’s footsteps by attending Grand Rapids Junior College. But that doesn’t mean she liked it.

“In my first semester, as a freshman from Forest Hills High School, I was resentful that I was ‘stuck’ at GRJC while others were able to go to four-year colleges and universities,” she said. “My family simply didn’t have the money, and my high school GPA was 3.0, which wasn’t enough to get into my dream school: the University of Michigan.”

While older brother David Cope found his footing as poetry editor for GRJC’s Display magazine, Laurie Cope Grand struggled to make friends, spending time between classes on what was then Bostwick Commons before heading to one of her two jobs. Then a friend dragged her to a tea at Kappa Sigma Phi, one of the sororities at GRJC back then, which opened the door to friendships that she maintains to this day. She was elected sorority president her sophomore year, maintaining to this day. She was elected sorority president her sophomore year, strengthening her leadership skills and self-confidence.

She also followed her brother’s lead by becoming Display’s poetry editor.

“Seeing my own poems published in the magazine was a thrill,” she said. “They were actually pretty terrible, but it made me feel like I could do anything.”

Cope Grand proceeded to reach the goals she’d set for herself: earning a bachelor’s degree from U of M and launching a 14-year career in human resources. She worked for department stores Abraham & Straus in New York, and then May Co. and Carter Hawley Hale in Los Angeles. In 1985, she enrolled in a psychology doctoral program at the University of Southern California. After completing the internship and licensing process, she worked as a marriage and family therapist in L.A. and then Illinois for a decade before returning to the corporate world as an instructional designer.

“Being a GRCC student means you are determined to have a good life. It means you are strong and know that nothing will be handed to you. You have to work for it. You understand that a good education will help you reach your goals and make your world better. What could be more important than that?” — Laurie Cope Grand

“Being a GRCC student means you are determined to have a good life,” she said. “It means you are strong and know that nothing will be handed to you. You have to work for it. You understand that a good education will help you reach your goals and make your world better. What could be more important than that?” — Laurie Cope Grand

Cope Grand and her husband, Mark Grand, started with quarterly contributions to GRCC.

“Recently, we decided to make our gift more meaningful by endowing the Cope Family Scholarship Fund,” she said. “This makes it possible for us to provide support in perpetuity and in a more targeted way.”

The “family” part of the scholarship is well-earned: in addition to Laurie and David Cope, who graduated from GRJC in 1969 and 1968, respectively, siblings Charlie Cope and Mary Cope Brennan graduated in 1973 and 1978. The scholarship, which is renewable, supports a freshman and sophomore, covering tuition and books.

“My single mother was a kindergarten teacher in the (Grand Rapids Public Schools), and we really struggled,” Cope Grand said. “As the second of four kids, with little money and one family car, it was very tough. If I can help a few students lighten that burden, I am glad to do so.”

Cope Grand now looks back at her GRJC years with affection and sees how they helped her become who she is now.

“Being a GRCC student means you are determined to have a good life,” she said. “It means you are strong and know that nothing will be handed to you. You have to work for it. You understand that a good education will help you reach your goals and make your world better. What could be more important than that?” — Laurie Cope Grand

OLDEST OF COPE SIBLINGS FINDS CONFIDENCE, CALLING AT GRCC

David Cope has always had a passion for poetry “ever since I first memorized psalms in first grade.” Grand Rapids Junior College gave him a way to explore that interest and, later, to inspire it in others.

Even with working 10 to 20 hours a week as a dishwasher, Cope found time to serve as the poetry editor for Display magazine, a compilation of art and writing from GRJC (now GRCC) students.

“Everything in the experience of work on Display began the continuous preparation and execution of writing that has given me a most fulfilling life,” he said. “From book publications and acclaim to national awards for my work and in my retirement.”

After receiving his GRJC associate degree in 1968, Cope earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Michigan and a master’s from Western Michigan University.

“GRJC gave me the platform to succeed at Michigan, and, eventually, I was able to use the skills I perfected in grad school to teach my most beloved subjects at GRCC,” he said.

In addition to teaching poetry, writing and literature classes during his 22 years at GRCC, Cope wrote poetry books, edited anthologies and served as Grand Rapids’ poet laureate from 2011 to 2014. He received the Pushcart Prize, won an award in literature from the American Academy/Institute of Arts and Letters, and was named GRCC’s Distinguished Alumnus in 1984.
A DREAM DEFERRED BECOMES A DREAM COME TRUE

GRCC Foundation scholarships boost Fabiola Carrillo Esparza over the finish line to teaching career.

When Fabiola Carrillo Esparza graduated from high school in 2007, college wasn’t in her plans. “The circumstances didn’t allow me to continue school back then,” she said. “I came with my parents and my brother at the age of 11 years old to the U.S. as tourists. My parents did not come with a plan to stay, but God had different plans for us. Soon after, our visas expired, and we became illegal immigrants.”

Her parents’ hard work supported the family, but they didn’t have the means to send their daughter to college. And her status as an illegal immigrant disqualified her from accessing help by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA. Esparza got a job making bouquets, married in 2010 and gave birth to a daughter, who revived those dormant college dreams.

But now there were resources available to Esparza.

“Thankfully, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program) started in 2012, and I was able to obtain a work permit,” she said. “I started working at Interpreter Network as an interpreter and office scheduler. In the meantime, we came across Justice for Our Neighbors, an organization that helps low-income families in West Michigan with legal services. I was blessed to obtain my permanent residency, a process that took close to a year.”

After the birth of her daughter, Esparza began working at the Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative, a coalition of community organizations that educates young children in vulnerable areas of West Michigan. It was there that she found a new dream: teaching. She applied for a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship from the GRCC Foundation: the John D. Hanink Memorial Scholarship and the Wege Teachers of Tomorrow Scholarship.

That additional support allowed her to quit her part-time job and be a full-time student for her final year at GRCC. She celebrated her graduation with her family this past spring.

“For now, I am finishing my internship at the GRCC preschool learning lab,” she said. “And, God willing, I have that a year from now I can go back to school and continue my education.”

Esparza shared her story – and her gratitude – during the recent Creating Connections breakfast. “I want to thank the donors of the Grand Rapids Community College Foundation, who have faith in us and support our education. I want you to know that it was a big blessing for me, and I am sure it has been – and will continue to be – for many others.”

But, again, timing is everything. Esparza received two scholarships from the GRCC Foundation: the John D. Hanink Memorial Scholarship and the Wege Teachers of Tomorrow Scholarship.

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2021-22

- Bishop Dennis J. and Dr. E. Jean Lackey - McElmurry Achievement Scholarship
- Ludwig Institute Grant - Michael Roche A.T.C. Athletic Scholarship
- Charles E. Schell Loan Fund - Ottawa County
- Secchia Institute for Culinary Education Food as Medicine Program Trade It Forward Scholarship Fund

NEWLY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2021-22

Many donors choose to name their endowed scholarship to establish a permanent legacy.

- Deb Bailey Memorial Scholarship
- Home Builders Association of Greater Grand Rapids Foundation Scholarship
- David M. Schieber Memorial Scholarship
- Annie Scholler Teacher Education Legacy Scholarship
MAKING IT PERSONAL

Christina and Michael Rosloniec target scholarship to helping student workers.

When Christina and Michael Rosloniec decide where to invest their time, talents and treasure, it’s always personal.

So it’s no surprise that Christina Rosloniec drew on her experiences as a Grand Rapids Junior College alumna when they were deciding the criteria for their GRCC Foundation scholarship.

“I felt passionate about designing our endowed scholarship to specifically help student workers at GRCC,” she said. “It feels good to know that we are lifting a little stress off the lives of student workers so they can have more time to study and become the best people they can be.”

Rosloniec, then Christina Kell, worked in the admissions office while attending GRJC. It was while a student that she got a taste of how satisfying it is to support something you believe in. She served as chair of the 1991 student campaign supporting a multimillion-dollar millage that allowed GRJC to separate from the Grand Rapids school district and become a community college.

She has since built a career on making — and helping others make — positive changes.

After completing her GRCC associate degree in 1991, she transferred to Western Michigan University for her bachelor’s. She worked as a fund development officer for a major nonprofit organization until her children were born.

“During that time at home, I formulated an innovative model of fund development that execute pro bono for nonprofit organizations throughout West Michigan to increase their community exposure and the level of dollars raised to position them for a biannual auction cycle, saving time, money and preventing staff and volunteer burnout,” she said. “The core philosophy behind that model is that every individual is given an opportunity to give no matter their capacity, and every gift is equally valued.”

Michael Rosloniec, institutional consulting director at Graystone Consulting, didn’t attend GRCC, but he agrees with his wife on the vital role it plays in West Michigan.

“It has more than a 100-year track record of offering educational opportunities that respond to local labor market needs,” he said. “GRCC graduates tend to stay close by, contributing all the more to our local economy, civic life and, as parents, raising healthier and more educated children.”

The Rosloniecs hope their scholarship keeps students from making difficult decisions when the unexpected happens. “Because life is hard,” Christina Rosloniec said. “Being a student at GRCC, I saw firsthand what my peers were having to face. Those challenges might be a bit different now — some may even argue that the challenges are greater today. What I do know is that this college has shaped me into a better thinker than any other college I could have done,” he said.

Fabiola Carrillo Esparza’s scholarships allowed her to work through her final year at GRCC as a full-time student. “Being a wife, mother of two young children, and working a part-time job was very difficult,” she said. “It meant going to sleep past midnight to spend some time with my children after work, and then do homework.”

At tables throughout the Ford Fieldhouse, similar experiences were being shared between scholarship recipients and generous GRCC Foundation donors.
SHARING OUR STORIES

LEAVING A LEGACY

JIM AND DONNA BROOKS SUPPORT
GRCC LAKEshore CAMPUS TO
STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Jim and Donna Brooks have worked with regional planning organizations for more than 20 years, and their support of GRCC’s Lakeshore Campus was an important extension of those efforts.

“It became clear to our community’s leadership that our education system needs to adapt to the digital age and that we were missing a key piece of education system: a full-service community college that provides services and classes that GRCC offered at your Ottawa County sites. The Brooks Family Learning Commons, an area for students to socialize and study, was named in Jim and Donna Brooks’ honor. The Lakeshore campus allows students to earn credits for degrees or to transfer to four-year institutions, or in-demand careers skills. The renovations have earned national recognition and architectural awards.

For the Brookses, the Lakeshore Campus represents what’s possible when a community works together: “No one can do projects of this magnitude on their own,” Jim Brooks said. “It requires community collaboration and partnership to create the campus facility, develop the training programs, provide the teachers and staff as well as scholarship support for students whose families lack the financial means. “Our family is happy to do our share. Our community is fortunate that others who have been blessed with success feel the same.”

MAKE A LASTING IMPACT FOR OUR STUDENTS

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 tax-deferred plan.

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 70½ 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.

Foundation partners with free will-writing website

The GRCC Foundation has partnered with FreeWill, a website that makes writing a will simple, quick and free! Almost two-thirds of Americans do not have an estate plan. Protect yourself and your loved ones by going to freewill.com/GRCCFoundation and letting the experts there walk you through writing a will in about 20 minutes.
Additionally, FreeWill can help you plan beneficiaries for assets not included in your will - like a 401(k), IRA or life insurance policy. These “non-probate” assets must be planned separately from your will.

As you write your will, you can choose to create a legacy gift by naming the GRCC Foundation in your plan. FreeWill allows you to specify your gift amount and how you’d like us to allocate it. Non-probate assets can also be donated to the foundation.

Protect yourself and your loved ones by going to freewill.com/GRCCFoundation.
SHARING OUR STORIES

JENNIFER BRYANT GRONDZIK
Alumna
Director of Community Development at Camp Blodgett

“I am so grateful to GRCC and their many resources for academic success. GRCC helped me reset my education journey. It provided a supportive, diverse and challenging environment that encouraged me to finish my four-year degree.”

WYNN MA
Current student, plastics engineering technology
Plastics Scholarship

“To me as an immigrant, GRCC is a great college that offers me a chance to follow a degree in a new country. At GRCC, I know that there will be somebody who is always ready to help me whenever I need it and assist me in overcoming any obstacles.”

LIZ TIMMER
Donor
Golden Raider Scholarship

“I wanted to support the Golden Raider retiree scholarship fund, which was created to support the children, grandchildren and grand-nieces and grand-nephews of GRCC retirees,” she said. “As a grandparent, I liked the idea of helping other retirees’ family members get the education they wanted. The fact that GRCC is constantly creating programs to stay current with the job market makes contributing to GRCC that much more important and rewarding.”

EULA GADDIS
Alumna
Director of Quality at Jireh Metal

“I know firsthand the impact a GRCC education can have in a life. As a director of Quality, I owe a lot to Grand Rapids Community College and to the programs here.”

HAILEY VEENEMAN
Current student, accounting
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“I lost my partner on Christmas of 2020 at 29 years old, and it is, by far, the biggest obstacle I have ever imagined myself going through. He was my main supporter and the person who convinced me that I could go back to school and achieve what I wanted. I took some time off and wasn’t sure if I would return, but I cannot change what happened, and not following through on the progress he helped me achieve would be a disservice to both of us.”

VANCE HAYES
Current student, business administration and supply chain
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“The financial burden of schooling has halted so many people from going after their dreams in life. This scholarship has enabled me to cover the cost of books and other supplies that, with a family of seven, have been an immense burden lifted off of my shoulders.”

SONIA RILEY
Alumna
Community school coordinator for Kent School Services Network

“I have a lot of people who provided a lot of support on my journey, and the GRCC staff is one of them, because, as an alumna, I know I can count on them to steer me in the right direction.”

FABRICE KANYAMTURA
Current student, political science
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“I was born in northern Rwanda as a Congolese refugee. Being born and growing up in a refugee camp has shaped the person that I am today. When I received the scholarship, I felt supported and motivated, knowing that someone I have never met has invested in my academic journey.”

ERICA VAZQUEZ
Current student, diagnostic medical sonography
Women in Science Scholarship

“Being a mother and wife at a young age definitely pushed back my educational goals, but I believe that everything you endure shapes you into the person you ought to be. My children and husband have motivated me every single day to give my best and reach my goals. A scholarship for me means that I am an overachiever; I am successful, and that I am capable.”

LOYD WINER
2022 Distinguished Alumnus
Established the Loyd and Suzanne Winer Scholarship

“No matter where you are right now, whatever your desires are, you can do it. You just have to apply yourself and work hard. Sometimes it’s not easy.”

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Director of Community Development at Camp Blodgett

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GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“I was born in northern Rwanda as a Congolese refugee. Being born and growing up in a refugee camp has shaped the person that I am today. When I received the scholarship, I felt supported and motivated, knowing that someone I have never met has invested in my academic journey.”

ERICA VAZQUEZ
Current student, diagnostic medical sonography
Women in Science Scholarship

“Being a mother and wife at a young age definitely pushed back my educational goals, but I believe that everything you endure shapes you into the person you ought to be. My children and husband have motivated me every single day to give my best and reach my goals. A scholarship for me means that I am an overachiever; I am successful, and that I am capable.”

LOYD WINER
2022 Distinguished Alumnus
Established the Loyd and Suzanne Winer Scholarship

“No matter where you are right now, whatever your desires are, you can do it. You just have to apply yourself and work hard. Sometimes it’s not easy.”

JENNIFER GRONDZIK
Alumna
Director of Community Development at Camp Blodgett

“I am so grateful to GRCC and their many resources for academic success. GRCC helped me reset my education journey. It provided a supportive, diverse and challenging environment that encouraged me to finish my four-year degree.”

WYNN MA
Current student, plastics engineering technology
Plastics Scholarship

“To me as an immigrant, GRCC is a great college that offers me a chance to follow a degree in a new country. At GRCC, I know that there will be somebody who is always ready to help me whenever I need it and assist me in overcoming any obstacles.”

LIZ TIMMER
Donor
Golden Raider Scholarship

“I wanted to support the Golden Raider retiree scholarship fund, which was created to support the children, grandchildren and grand-nieces and grand-nephews of GRCC retirees,” she said. “As a grandparent, I liked the idea of helping other retirees’ family members get the education they wanted. The fact that GRCC is constantly creating programs to stay current with the job market makes contributing to GRCC that much more important and rewarding.”

EULA GADDIS
Alumna
Director of Quality at Jireh Metal

“I know firsthand the impact a GRCC education can have in a life. As a director of Quality, I owe a lot to Grand Rapids Community College and to the programs here.”

HAILEY VEENEMAN
Current student, accounting
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“I lost my partner on Christmas of 2020 at 29 years old, and it is, by far, the biggest obstacle I have ever imagined myself going through. He was my main supporter and the person who convinced me that I could go back to school and achieve what I wanted. I took some time off and wasn’t sure if I would return, but I cannot change what happened, and not following through on the progress he helped me achieve would be a disservice to both of us.”

VANCE HAYES
Current student, business administration and supply chain
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“The financial burden of schooling has halted so many people from going after their dreams in life. This scholarship has enabled me to cover the cost of books and other supplies that, with a family of seven, have been an immense burden lifted off of my shoulders.”

SONIA RILEY
Alumna
Community school coordinator for Kent School Services Network

“I have a lot of people who provided a lot of support on my journey, and the GRCC staff is one of them, because, as an alumna, I know I can count on them to steer me in the right direction.”

FABRICE KANYAMTURA
Current student, political science
GRCC Foundation Scholarship

“I was born in northern Rwanda as a Congolese refugee. Being born and growing up in a refugee camp has shaped the person that I am today. When I received the scholarship, I felt supported and motivated, knowing that someone I have never met has invested in my academic journey.”

ERICA VAZQUEZ
Current student, diagnostic medical sonography
Women in Science Scholarship

“Being a mother and wife at a young age definitely pushed back my educational goals, but I believe that everything you endure shapes you into the person you ought to be. My children and husband have motivated me every single day to give my best and reach my goals. A scholarship for me means that I am an overachiever; I am successful, and that I am capable.”

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“No matter where you are right now, whatever your desires are, you can do it. You just have to apply yourself and work hard. Sometimes it’s not easy.”
LIVESTREAM LESSON SPOTLIGHTS
CHARCUTERIE BOARDS

Some cheeses, slices of prosciutto and salami, dabs of mustard and honey, small amounts of dried and pickled vegetables accompanied by crackers: Assemble these ingredients just right and you have a charcuterie board—and more.

“I think of charcuterie boards almost as a conversation piece,” said Jennifer Struik, an instructor with GRCC’s Secchia Institute for Culinary Education. “Discussions are stimulated by bringing food into the conversation, and it starts a chain reaction to discuss other topics. They can be kind of an educational tool.”

Struik led a livestream lesson in March from the Custer Alumni House kitchen on the art of creating a show-stopping charcuterie board. The Grand Rapids Community College Alumni Association shared a list of ingredients to have ready so participants could follow Struik through each step of the process.

Struik, who earned her Culinary Arts, Personal Chef and Chef Training certifications at GRCC, is very comfortable in front of the camera. An executive chef with Root Functional Medicine and creator of the popular “Jenny with the Good Eats” Instagram account, she was a winner in “Supermarket Stakeout” in 2020.

Check out the livestream at grcc.edu/AlumniChefs

ALUMNI CHECK OUT NEW LAKESHORE CAMPUS
As we celebrated the opening of GRCC’s Lakeshore Campus, we hosted a special event just for alumni. Alumni had the chance to explore the new space with guided tours. They then enjoyed music, games and food provided by Brann’s Steakhouse of Holland.

CHEF TRIMELL HAWKINS NAMED FIRST YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENT
There’s nothing like a good meal as a way to share traditions, comfort in times of trouble, and bring people together. Trimell Hawkins has used his culinary talent to that end in restaurants throughout West Michigan. His professional achievements and community involvement made him a perfect choice as the first recipient of GRCC’s Young Alumni Award.

Hawkins, who graduated from the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education in 2015, has learned and challenged himself at every step of his career.

“I’ve been fortunate to work for some great restaurants that have helped hone and develop my talent,” he said. “Black Heron was my first executive chef position, then Forty Acres, where I was truly able to spread my wings and flourish, and a few restaurants from there to my current position, where I’ve learned a great deal and grown.”

He is now executive chef at the Portico Restaurant in the Canopy by Hilton Hotel, which opened in fall 2021. Hawkins’ grandmother taught him to cook, and after leaving the Marines, he decided to follow his culinary passion. People around him kept recommending GRCC and the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education, so he enrolled.

“My experience at GRCC was one of the most important and vital things to my success in my career,” he said. “It truly prepared me for this industry and gave me tools to be successful. The program gives you insight on what to expect, how to handle it, how to grow, and how to face adversity and overcome.”

Hawkins counts culinary professor Kevin Dunn as a mentor and friend. “Trimell was working, raising his family, while being an excellent student,” Dunn said. “He can best be described as a sponge – he wants to learn from every chef as much as they have to offer.”

For Hawkins, cooking isn’t just how he makes a living: It’s how he cares for others.

“When I had hip replacement surgery, I stopped by to see him on my way home,” Dunn said. “Trimell had a caravan of to-go food for my family. He fed my family for the entire weekend!”

“I feel as though cooking is probably one of the most vulnerable things you can do,” Hawkins said in an interview at Portico’s opening. “You kind of let somebody take a peek into your soul because you’re trusting them to critique you. When you put a plate of food in somebody’s face, you’re exposing your most vulnerable self.”

Jenna Vande Kamp, development manager for alumni relations and annual giving, said Hawkins was a perfect choice to launch the new Young Alumni Award.

“Trimell’s achievements—and his pride in his GRCC education—are representative of so many of our graduates and the impact that they’ve already had in their community,” she said.
PLAYERS FROM CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL TEAMS CELEBRATE WITH CURRENT RAIDERS

GRCC celebrated thrills from the past and present during a special game at LMCU Ballpark this past spring.

The Raiders faced off against Calvin University on April 19, tying in the first game and winning the second 8-0.

Helping to celebrate the current team’s accomplishments were about 20 players and coaches from GRCC’s NJCAA National Championship teams in 1996 and 1997. Led by Hall-of-Fame coach Doug Wabeke, these teams were the first from GRCC – in any sport – to win a national championship. Two players, Brad Block and Joe Trigg, were named All-Americans.

"Each world series, we swept 8-0, 8-0 each year, and it was just an awesome team,” former second baseman Trigg told FOX 17. “It was like even the infield practice, everything was like choreography. Everything was smooth and clean and the best baseball years of my life for sure.”

The baseball alumni threw out ceremonial first pitches to the current Raiders. The game also featured volleyball player Alena Visnovsky performing the national anthem and recognition for current members of the cross country, basketball and golf teams.

2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT RECEIVES NATIONAL HONORS

The GRCC Communications Department’s efforts to share the stories of students overcoming obstacles and the people who support them earned the highest honor in community college marketing and communications last year.

The 2019-20 GRCC Foundation Annual Report earned the Paragon Awards “Best in Show” honor, in addition to first place in the Annual Report category from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations.

Judges praised the report’s stories, photos, design and graphics. “The intention was to put the emphasis on people, and they definitely delivered on that,” judges said. “Well put together and visually enticing. Love it.”

GRCC CRAFTS WAY TO TRACK ALUMNI-CONNECTED BREWERIES

From Perrin Brewing Co. in Comstock Park to Big Lake Brewing in Holland, GRCC alumni have created unique beers and distinctive settings for them to be enjoyed.

Now there’s a map, available online, that guides you to alumni-owned or operated craft breweries. It includes Fountain Hill Brewery, located in GRCC’s Winner-Bottrell Applied Technology Center and operated by instructors and students in the Craft Brewing program. Opened in 2016, it was the first federally and state-licensed, revenue-generating brewery operated by a college.

“We know how much our alumni love to support their fellow alumni,” said Jenna VandeKamp, development manager for Alumni Relations and Annual Giving. “This map is an especially fun way they can do that.”

See the entire map at grcc.edu/BreweryTour

NEW WAYS TO GIVE

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.

We’ve added two methods of payment – PayPal and Venmo – to make our donation process even easier than it was before.

Your first stop: 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 Custer Alumni House, 473 E. Fulton St.
Did you know GRCC alumni can be found in all 50 U.S. states and many countries?! No matter where you are, you can keep up with the latest news from GRCC through our social media outlets.

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### ALUMNI HAPPENINGS

#### STAY CONNECTED

Extend your networking by following our LinkedIn page – linkedin.com/school/grand-rapids-community-college

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#### 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.

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### PHOTOGRApher WALKS FOR COMMENCEMENT – 20 YEARS AFTER EARNING DEGREE

Ron Moore decided, at age 48, that it was time to finish the associate degree he started at GRCC two decades ago. 

“They added some new requirements to the (photography) degree program,” he said. “At that time, I was already working full time as a photographer, and I was getting married.”

“The degree just got back-burnered.”

After working as a photographer’s assistant for several years, Moore opened Photo Op Studio in Holland in 2005. Photo Op offers commercial, event, wedding, real estate and portrait photography.

But college still felt like unfinished business to Moore. So in March, he stopped by GRCC’s new Lakeshore Campus to see how many credits he needed to finish his degree.

Academic advisor Kristie Kozub, a former West Ottawa High School classmate of Moore’s, had some good news for him.

“Apparently, I had been sitting on 62 credits for almost 20 years!” Moore said. “Kristie explained I already had enough credits to graduate and could have done it a long time ago – it was crazy!”

So on April 29, Moore walked across the stage at GRCC’s commencement and accepted his long-awaited diploma.

“My mom is alive and healthy, and I wanted her to see me walk,” he said. “But I also wanted to do it for myself because it’s important to finish what you start.

“It took a lot of discipline back then going to college and working my butt off full time. But that discipline helped sculpt me into the person I am today – and I’m proud of that.”
ONE DAY, FOUR CELEBRATIONS

Sometimes, there’s so much to celebrate that one event isn’t enough. GRCC celebrated renovations to four historic buildings with four ribbon-cuttings in a single day.

“Together, these projects reflect an investment in our students and in our community’s future,” said Dr. Kathryn Mullins, vice president of College Advancement and executive director of the GRCC Foundation. “GRCC is uniquely positioned to help learners connect, or reconnect, with higher education, meeting people where they are to help them get to where they want to be.”

The work included renovations to Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall, Steven C. Ender Hall and the Custer Alumni House, in addition to a new wing and other improvements to the Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center.

Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall
- Opened as a high school in 1923; became part of Grand Rapids Junior College in 1944.
- Houses classrooms for more than 5,200 students each week.
- Four floors renovated, modernizing admissions and financial aid spaces, classrooms and entrances as well as adding gathering areas for students.

Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center
- Named for business and community leaders Tom and Joyce Wisner and David and Michelle Bottrall.
- Houses Secchia Institute for Culinary Education, Computer Information Systems and Applied Manufacturing programs.
- 18,416-square-foot addition constructed with machine tool and data center labs as well as renovations to the computer lab and increased student gathering and study spaces.

Steven C. Ender Hall
- Formerly the Mable Engle House; used for temporary office space.
- Renamed in 2020 for President Emeritus Steven C. Ender.
- Renovations updated the house while preserving historical features.
- Now used by the Experiential Learning and Honors programs, Student Employment Services and Student Life clubs and organizations.

Custer Alumni House
- Formerly Lettinga House; housed Institutional Research Department, General Counsel and temporary offices.
- Renamed in 2020 for alumnus and Custer Inc. founder Dave Custer, director emeritus of the GRCC Foundation, and his wife, Karen Custer.
- Kitchen renovated, meeting space and offices added.
- Now home to GRCC Foundation and Alumni Relations.

GUESTS RETURN FOR IN-PERSON COMMENCEMENT

Virtual ceremonies and drive-through celebrations came in handy during the pandemic, but everyone was glad for a return to normal this past spring.

Commencement took place in the Ford Fieldhouse, like it had for 2021. This year, however, graduates weren’t alone – guests were once again able to attend in person. Five tickets were available to each graduate for the event, which was split into ceremonies for the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Workforce Development.

GRADfest also returned as an in-person experience, held this year at both the Main and Lakeshore campuses. Graduates took care of paperwork; picked up caps, gowns and other important items; and enjoyed specially decorated cookies.

CLUB ENCOURAGES CONSISTENT GIVING

Armen Oumedian was always there when the GRCC Foundation needed him, and the Armen Oumedian Consecutive Giving Club recognizes the employees who consistently provide financial support for our students.

Employees become members of the club by donating to the foundation for two or more years in a row. They receive invitations to special events, and five, 10, 15, 20 and more years of giving receive special recognition.

Consistent support makes a tremendous difference in our students’ lives, and we appreciate the steadfastness of all our club members!
LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF COLLEGE ADVANCEMENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GRCC FOUNDATION

This was a year of innovation and celebration for the Grand Rapids Community College Foundation!

We’re excited to see a busy campus again, and we’ve enjoyed hosting events in our beautiful Custer Alumni House. Guests were again able to cheer graduates in person at Commencement in the spring, and we were warmed by seeing the smiles of students and staff in person once more. As a campus and a community, we continue to emerge from such difficult times. That is definitely worth celebrating!

Another reason? We were able to connect more than 1,000 students to more than $1.4 million in scholarships. For many of our students, a scholarship allows them to overcome financial obstacles and earn a degree or certificate. Some will continue their education at a four-year university. Others will head into careers, or gain new skills to help them move ahead. Each is worthy of a celebration.

The work of this foundation, and the support of you as a donor, helps these students achieve their dreams. Each and every gift matters, helping to change a life and make our greater community stronger.

At the GRCC Foundation, we have been exploring new methods of connecting with you to make giving as easy and seamless as possible. We have added PayPal and Venmo to the many ways you can donate, and we have a new partnership with FreeWill, which provides a free, online will-writing resource to our community.

We also made an exciting addition to our list of student supports: the GRCC Foundation Board of Directors Excellence Scholarship. This new award, which goes to one student each from Kent and Ottawa counties, covers tuition and fees for a full academic year. Our board members know very well the struggles our students face and wanted to help in a very personal way.

Our community support also continues to shape our campus. We’re modernizing facilities and creating new spaces. We’re setting the environment for students to thrive, and to share our inspiring stories with all who attend and visit.

We’re excited about these new ways of approaching our life-changing work and hope they make giving even easier. Together, we’ve been able to do so much as we recognize there is still much to do.

As you read the stories in this report, remember that you played a role in that student’s success. Your help inspired someone to carry on. Your gift reminded them that they are not alone, and that a caring community stands with them.

I’m so proud of the work we do together. Please know that your generosity is appreciated and celebrated – and never taken for granted, by me, or the people we help.

Thank you for all you do to make Grand Rapids Community College and West Michigan an incredible place to live and work.

With gratitude,

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

Foundation Statement of Financial Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS (as of June 30)</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$3,210,117</td>
<td>$4,578,042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions receivable net of allowance for uncollectable pledges of $250 at June 30, 2022 and $1,000 June 30, 2021</td>
<td>$2,155,537</td>
<td>$3,760,693</td>
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<td>Accrued interest receivable</td>
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<td>Investments</td>
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<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$37,079,013</td>
<td>$46,620,565</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (as of June 30)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds held on behalf of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL LIABILITIES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Net assets: |
| Without donor restrictions | $8,494,809 | $8,242,127 |
| With donor restrictions | $25,668,404 | $33,767,067 |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | $34,163,213 | $42,009,194 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | $37,079,013 | $46,620,565 |

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