

Serving the Community in 2021 and 2022

Dear resident:

As 2021 ended and 2022 began, I reflected on highlights of the past year and the City's plans to accomplish great things with and for the community in the new year. While 2021 was a challenging time for all, your Grand Rapids city team doubled down on our values of accountability, sustainability, customer service, innovation, collaboration and

equity to guide us through the pandemic and other challenges. We delivered important outcomes for Grand Rapidians while continuing to provide vital public services you rely on. Selected highlights from 2021 include economic recovery, continued progress on affordable and safe housing, help for the unhoused, violence prevention, public safety reform, community engagement and quality of life investments.

Economically, the City supported local businesses by expanding outdoor dining in social zones. The return of ArtPrize and special events stimulated neighborhood and downtown business districts. We continued to invest in retail retention and attraction efforts. More than 118 small businesses - more than half of them minority-owned - received grant assistance totaling \$500,000. And the number of microlocal businesses registered to do businesses with the City has grown by 76% since 2020; increasing the opportunities for our diverse community to participate in City contract work.

The City has prioritized affordable housing in many ways this past year. We allocated \$5.9 million for affordable housing investments. A new Affordable Housing Fund was established which will continue this commitment over the long term. We made existing housing safer by replacing 443 lead water service lines. A \$5 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will allow us to replace another 1,600 lead service lines in Neighborhoods of Focus over the next four years. To make household budgeting easier, residents now have the option of a monthly (instead of quarterly) water/sewer payment plan. To help the unhoused community, we expanded the Homeless Outreach Team and provided funding support for an emergency shelter and a pilot program for short-term storage of unhoused persons' belongings.

Our commitment to a safe community was demonstrated by the local implementation of the Cure Violence evidencebased violence reduction program. Cure Violence is a partnership between the City, the Urban League, Spectrum Health System and the philanthropic community. Further safe community enhancements are reflected in the Police Department's shift to a neighborhood policing model that emphasizes crime prevention and community trust building.

We expanded the scope and reach of the City's community engagement efforts. Through the Participatory Budgeting pilot project, the community will propose, define and choose projects to be funded by a \$2 million allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

Quality of life and infrastructure investments included completion of 10 park improvement projects, planting of 1,400 trees, continuation of e-scooters and e-bikes, improved bus stop cleanliness and approval of 43 new bus stop shelters. This is in addition to a \$28 million investment in Vital Streets that includes \$3.1 million of sidewalk projects.

Key measures of Grand Rapids' success include population growth and corporate relocations. When residents and businesses choose to move here from other communities and regions, they are expressing confidence in our city's future and their desire to be part of it. From 2010 to 2020, Grand Rapids' population grew by 11,000 residents, or 5.8%. Recently announced corporate relocations include Perrigo, Acrisure, MCPc, and the Spectrum Health Center for Transformation and Innovation.

In 2022, we will sustain our momentum from 2021 and increase our progress in many areas of our Strategic Plan. A new round of small business grant awards is in progress and soon will be completed. ArtPrize will return and the pace of special events is expected to accelerate. The Affordable Housing Fund Board will be appointed and begin to make decisions about the investment framework to grow the affordable housing supply over the next generations.

While homicides, a key indicator of violence, were down 50% in 2021 (19 as compared to 38 in 2020), we don't take this progress for granted. We will maintain our focus on community safety. Cure Violence and other innovative approaches to crime reduction, like expanded co-response with mental health partners, are expected to gain traction. I will announce the next police chief, who will continue GRPD's progress to ensure that all people feel safe and are safe at all times throughout our community.

The Participatory Budgeting pilot program will advance toward project selection and implementation. And the Community Master Plan project will focus on community engagement - to better understand your priorities for Grand Rapids' future.

Our work, and Grand Rapids' success, depends on your help and input. Engaging and connecting with the Grand Rapids community is one of the top priorities in our Strategic Plan. An engaged community plays a meaningful role both in public decisions-making processes and the implementation of projects that affect your daily lives. By providing your input and suggestions you equip our City government to make better-informed decisions on behalf of all who live, work and play in our great city. In 2022, there will continue to be many opportunities for you to provide input and suggestions about the decisions that shape our operations and allow us to innovate sustainable solutions that elevate your quality of life.

Please find enclosed in this issue of We Are GR some of the ways to engage with your city government. I look forward to seeing you soon.

In partnership,

Mark D. Mulion

Mark Washington, City Manager

The Many Ways to Engage in the Budget Process

You can provide feedback sooner than you think

Each year, we create an annual fiscal plan that follows the mission laid out in our strategic plan – to elevate quality of life through excellent City services. The priorities of our strategic plan guide our annual goals, budget initiatives, resources, department operations, projects and investments. It helps shape our annual budget, guide its near-term progress and achieve our long-term vision in a transparent and trackable manner.

It is our solemn responsibility to act with accountability when utilizing your tax dollars. We also strive to use resources wisely to ensure we maintain adequate funding for the services, public facilities and infrastructure necessary to our community's present and future needs.

Long before the City Commission adopts a final fiscal plan in May, the staff begins internally researching, compiling and analyzing information. The feedback, concerns and

Budget Process CONTINUED FROM B1

ideas from community members and relevant appointed boards, commissions, committees and authorities related to key department operations are taken into consideration and informs the staff proposal. Your first chance to influence the budget can begin as early as December by engaging the relevant board, commission, committee and authority that offers an opportunity for public engagement or comment on potential budget and service issues. The city manager considers the various feedback in drafting the proposed budget following the priorities listed in the strategic plan based on available resources.

Below is a list of boards, commissions, committees and authorities that offer the opportunity for public engagement in the budget process and the approximate meeting where budget discussions will take place. Please refer to the City's website (grandrapidsmi.gov) for the meeting schedule and times for each body.

Economic Prosperity and Affordability

- Downtown Improvement District March/April
- North Monroe Tax Increment Finance Authority March/April
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority March/April
- Economic Development Corporation March/April
- North Quarter Corridor Improvement Authority March/April

- Michigan Street Corridor Improvement Authority March/April
- South Division-Grandville Corridor Improvement
 Authority
 - March/April Southtown Corridor
- Southtown Corridor Improvement Authority March/April
- West Side Corridor Improvement Authority March/April
- Uptown Corridor Improvement Authority & BID March/April
- Smartzone Local Development Finance Authority March/April
- Art Advisory Committee
 January
- Downtown Development Authority March/April
- Uptown Business Improvement District March/April
- Uptown Corridor Improvement Authority March/April

Health and Environment

• Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Budget updates in fall, board comment 1st quarter; public comment available every meeting

Safety

• Police Chief Advisory Group February

Project Voting

and Selection

Once the boards, authorities, committees or commissions submit their proposed budgets to the city manager, the manager will use the input to create his proposed fiscal plan and presents it to the City Commission for consideration. The City Commission then holds a series of budget workshops, culminating with a public hearing before the finalized fiscal plan is adopted.

Below are the tentative upcoming dates for City Commission review of the fiscal year 2023 budget – those without starting times are yet to be scheduled as of this printing:

- Tuesday, April 26: Preliminary Fiscal Plan presentation to City Commission at Committee of the Whole (10 a.m.)
- Tuesday, May 3: Budget Review Workshop
- Thursday, May 5: Budget Town Hall
- Tuesday, May 10: Budget Review WorkshopTuesday, May 17: Committee of the Whole
- Discussion (10 a.m.)
- Tuesday, May 17: Public Hearing at City Commission (7 p.m.)
- Tuesday, May 24: Deliberation and City Commission Adoption

We encourage you to participate in the government budgeting process and express how you would like your tax dollars spent. We ensure that all meeting agendas, backup materials and deliberations are as transparent as possible. All meetings agendas are posted on our website. You can follow our City Commission workshops, town halls and meetings virtually as we broadcast and stream them live on Comcast Channel 26, Facebook and YouTube.

WHAT'S YOUR PRIORITY

Now - May 2022 Outreach & Idea Collection **June - July** 2022 Proposal Development

Sept - Oct 2022

Winning projects are submitted to the Grand Rapids City Commission for adoption.

The pilot year of PBGR is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act and projects must align with one of the eight funding priorities. Visit PBGR.org for details.

If you had \$2 million to invest in Grand Rapids, where would it go?

YOU DECIDE!

Participatory Budgeting Grand Rapids gives you an opportunity to offer ideas on how to invest \$2 million in your neigborhoods. Participatory budgeting allows you to submit your project ideas, and then you and your neighbors vote on the projects you'd like to see get done!



Go to pbgr.org to get involved!

...or find us on Facebook and Twitter @pbgrandrapids



WEAREGR January 2022

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Please Remember: Income Tax Deadline for Individual Tax Returns is April 30

As a resident of Grand Rapids, you are required to file an income tax returns regardless of where your place of employment is located. Non-residents who work in Grand Rapids are required to file a non-resident return.

Our Income Tax Department will be available for Saturday hours from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on February 5 and 19, March 5 and 19, April 2 and 9, and on April 23 and 30.

If you need help preparing your City return, please bring the first page of your federal return and any 1099s or W-2s you have. Appointments can be made (not required) by calling 616-456-3415 option 0 or emailing grincometax@ grcity.us.



We've Got You Covered for the 2022 Elections



It's a busy year of elections, and your City Clerk's Office wants to make sure you're prepared. Here are important dates and information for each election:

August 2: Partisan Primary election for federal, state, and county commission offices – Democratic and Republicans candidates are listed on the ballot. You need to select one or the other – can't cross between parties. There will also be a Non-Partisan Primary for City Comptroller, City Commission, Library Board, Judges and proposals if necessary.

November 8: Gubernatorial (Governor) general election -

You may vote a straight party for partisan offices or select candidates individually. This ballot includes federal, state, county, judicial, city and school offices as well as proposals.

New districts and precinct lines on the horizon

Voters passed Proposal 2 in 2018 that created a Citizen's Independent Redistricting Commission. The commission was formed to draw new lines for the U.S. House of Representatives, State House of Representatives and State Senate districts. Kent County will also be drawing new County Commission district lines. The district sizes will be based on the 2020 Census count. The City of Grand Rapids will review these new district lines to adjust precinct lines. Registered voters will get new voter registration cards in the mail this spring that list their districts, precinct and polling location.

Some reminders before you head to the polls:

 Absentee voting – All registered voters are eligible to receive an absentee ballot without a reason. To receive a ballot, simply fill out an application before every election. The application is available at grandrapidsmi. gov/Residents/Elections/Absentee or in the secondfloor City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Validated parking is available in the Government Center Ramp off Monroe and Ottawa avenues. Or, you can be placed on a permanent AV list to receive an application before each election by signing up at grandrapidsmi.gov/avlist or contacting the Clerk's Office at 616.456.3010.

- Straight party voting You can vote the partisan section of the ballot by selecting the party only.
- Voter registration Residents who are 18 or older and a United States Citizen are automatically registered to vote when they make a transaction with the Secretary of State. You may register to vote by mail up to 15 days before an election and or in person at the City Clerk's Office within 14 days of the election up to Election Day. You need to prove residency in the city.
- Check your voter registration status, register to vote, view a sample ballot or find your polling location at michigan.gov/vote.

Need a passport or document notarized? We can help

Did you know that our City Clerk's Office offers passport and notary services? If you need to apply for a passport, simply make an appointment calling 616.456.3010. If you need a document notarized, visit the second-floor City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The fee for notarization is \$5 per signature. No appointment is needed. To learn more about these services and all that the Clerk's Office has to offer, visit grandrapidsmi.gov/clerk.

City Issues Online Guide to Help Residents Tackle Winter

Winter Preparedness Guide offers reminders about snow plowing, seasonal parking and driving – and more

Our 2021-2022 edition of the City of Grand Rapids' annual Winter Preparedness Guide is out with tips on how to you can prepare for seasonal services and emergencies.

The guide helps you prepare by providing information about winter services such as snow plowing, seasonal parking restrictions, holiday refuse collection, homelessness outreach, emergency preparedness and emergency kits. The 2021-22 expanded edition also covers new topics including preventing fires in the home, safe winter driving, and how to get emergency alerts sent to smart phones.

The Winter Preparedness Guide is available at grandrapidsmi.gov/winter. Neighborhood associations, community groups and library branches also have a limited number of printed copies for those without reliable digital access.



Mayor's Youth Council Introduced to the Public and City Commission

The Grand Rapids Mayor's Youth Council was introduced to the public and to the Grand Rapids City Commission in December. This group of high school students meet monthly with Mayor Rosalynn Bliss to learn about the functions of city government, participate in community service projects and host the annual KidSpeak forum at City Hall.

For more information on the Mayor's Youth Council, contact Shannon L. Harris, executive director of Our Community's Children, at (616) 456-3558.



This is How We Plow City Streets Ever wonder how we operate snow clearing on our streets? We're here to demystify the process.

Our primary goal is to clear all roads of snow within 24-36 hours of a weather event

We're constantly improving our winter operations, so we can deliver the highest level of service to our community. Our plow operators use de-icing materials on major streets to minimize snow and ice. Pretreating material may be applied to bridges, hills and curves before a snow event, if needed. We work hard to minimize our salt use as part of our commitment to environmental sustainability as it reduces runoff in our rivers and streams. This is also part of our commitment to be a good steward of funds. Plus, many of our plow trucks also have side wings that plow an additional half lane of snow.

When we do have to use salt, our plow trucks have liquid storage capabilities. This allows for the pre-wetting of salt as plows spread it on street surfaces. Pre-wetting salt reduces the bounce to keep it on the road. It also helps us reduce the amount of salt we use by 30 percent – another money saver. Plus, salt activates faster when treated.

We prioritize plowing on first-attention routes

The major high-traffic streets in our city are first-attention streets for snow plowing. These streets carry the most traffic and have the highest speed limits. We apply salt to all firstattention streets to make travel safe. Examples of first attention streets include:

- Burton Street
- Division Avenue



- Fulton Street
- Leonard Street
- Monroe Avenue

We plow secondary (local) streets and alleys when more than 3 inches of snow falls

We monitor weather conditions and clear secondary streets and alleys when there are more than 3 inches of snow. These streets are often less traveled and have lower speeds. De-icing salt typically is not applied to secondary streets. We may salt these streets if there are hills, severe curves or special circumstances in the city. This protects our local watershed and keeps winter maintenance costs manageable. Examples of secondary streets include:

- Side streets like Merrifield St
- Cul-de-sacs
- Alleys

When snow events last a long time, our snowplow crews may need to leave secondary streets and return to firstattention routes to ensure safety on high-traffic streets. While we make every effort to clear bike lanes our main priority is to keep the automobile travel lanes clear of snow and ice.

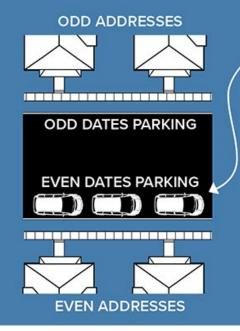


Sign up to receive emergecy alerts for severe weather and other emergencies at grandrapidsmi.gov/EmergencyAlerts.

Hey, Grand Rapidians. SEE THESE SIGNS?

Then, think ahead before bed. Odd-even parking is enforced on this street.





- On even dates, park on the side of the street with even addresses (1 AM – 6 PM).
- For 7 hours each night (6 PM 1 AM), you can park on either side of the street. Just make sure to think ahead before bed and move your vehicle to the side of the road matching the next day's date by 1 AM.
- On odd dates, park on the side of the street with odd addresses (1 AM – 6 PM).

Police and Fire Personnel Partner with Local Mental Health Professionals

The Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) is a partnership between the Grand Rapids fire and police departments with the addition of mental health professionals from Network180. HOT is available for street outreach to unsheltered persons. They do not respond to general issues outside of street homelessness. Any individual or family who is experiencing housing instability or seeking shelter (homeless or soon to be homeless) should call 2-1-1 to access community resources.

Purpose

HOT is available for non-emergent issues related to unsheltered homelessness.

Operating hours

Monday - Saturday 6 AM - 6 PM

Contact Info

Phone: 616.456.4240 Email: grhot@grcity.us

Other Resources

- Call 211 if you are experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness to connect to resources
- Call 311 with general questions or concerns related to homelessness in the City of Grand Rapids



• Call 911 in instances related to safety concerns, crimes in progress, damage to property, or threat to life

Emergency Shelters

Locations for emergency shelter for men, women, and families are to the right. Please contact 211 for information about emergency shelter or warming centers.

- Mel Trotter Ministries (225 Commerce Ave. SW Grand Rapids, MI 49503)
- Degage Ministries (144 Division Ave. S Grand Rapids, MI 49503)

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Adopt a Hydrant and Keep Your Home and Neighborhood Safe

Our Adopt-a-Hydrant Program is a collaboration between the Grand Rapids Water System, Fire Department, and you. As a volunteer, you are a tremendous help in ensuring hydrants are ready for use by the Grand Rapids Fire Department.

Individuals, businesses, neighborhoods, civic groups, and other organizations can select a nearby hydrant and accept responsibility to:

- Clear snow
- Trim tall grass and vegetation
- Report damage or water leaks

Call 311 Customer Service at 3-1-1 or 616.456.3000 to sign up today.



City's Yard Waste Drop-Off Site Now Open Throughout Winter

The hours of our yard waste drop-off site, 2001 Butterworth St. SW, are now extended throughout this winter. The site is open 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday during the winter months for yard waste drop-off. The site is open to Grand Rapids residents only. You must bring proof of residence when visiting the site.

As a reminder, yard waste must be loose or in a paper bag. Plastic bags are not allowed.

If you have questions about the site and whether your yard waste will be accepted at the site, please call 311 or dial 616-456-3000. For more information visit the City's yard waste website: grandrapidsmi.gov/YardWaste.



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Let's Con

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WEAREGR January 2022



There are Still Ways to Enjoy Grand Rapids Parks During the Winter Season

Did you know our City parks are open daily, year-round, from dawn to dusk? Whether you're looking for an open space for snow angels and building a snowman, a wooded trail to take in fresh air and natural sights, or a thrilling sledding hill, our parks and public spaces are great for winter weather activities.

Learn more about everything our parks have to offer in the winter at grandrapidsmi.gov/winterfun.

Sledding

Sledding has always been a favorite winter pastime for families. If you don't have a sled, you can make your own using common household materials. Our favorite sledding hills at the following parks:

- **Highland Park** (700 College Ave NE) Parking lot off Grand Ave is open and plowed.
- Mary Waters Park (1042 Lafayette Ave NE) Parking lot off Lafayette Ave is open and plowed
- **Mulick Park** (1632 Sylvan Ave SE) Gate is open, parking lot is not plowed



Richmond Park sledding hill is a community favorite.

- Plaster Creek Park (2401 Buchanan Ave SW) Entrance off Stafford Ave is open, parking lot is not plowed
- Richmond Park (1101 Richmond St NW) Main parking lot off Richmond Ave is open and plowed

Snowshoeing, XC Skiing, and Fat Tire Biking

In the winter months, Indian Trails Golf Course (2776

Kalamazoo Ave SE) is transformed into a winter activity hub. Bring your own cross country skis and fat tire bikes, or rent snowshoes from us Thursday through Sunday. Learn more at indiantrailsgc.org/winterfun.



Groomed winter activity trails at Indian Trails Golf Course

Hiking and Outdoor Exploration

Winter hiking can be a relaxing escape from the City and no snow is required! The following parks are great for taking in natural winter beauty across Grand Rapids: **Ken-O-Sha Park** (1353 Van Auken St SE)

Ken-O-Sha Park is home to a trail head for the Plaster Creek Trail. The paved and natural trails throughout this 82-acre park wind through peaceful wooded areas and along Plaster Creek.

Parking info: Entrance is open and the parking lot is plowed by Grand Rapids Public Schools. **Riverside Park** (2001 Monroe Ave NE)

Riverside Park is a sprawling 186-acre park on the City's Northeast side. The park has plenty of open space for playing in the snow, excellent views of the Grand River and Grand Rapids skyline, and plowed paved trails for walking and running.

Parking info: North and south parking lots are open and plowed, Guild St entrance is open but not plowed, little league field entrance is closed.

Aman Park (O-1859 Lake Michigan Dr NW)

Aman Park is the largest park under City ownership. The park has over 300 acres of wooded area and over 6 miles of

natural trails to explore. Be sure to check out the footbridges over sand creek for picturesque winter beauty.

Parking info: Entrance is open and plowed by Indian Trails Camp.

Burton Woods (2259 Everest Ave SE)

Burton woods is a 6-acre natural area with a small trail loop perfect for short but scenic walks through snow-covered pines.

Parking info: Plowed street parking is available at the trailhead. The nearby Garfield Park Gym parking lot off Madison Ave is open and plowed.

Huff Park (2399 Ball Ave NE)

The Huff Park boardwalk is a year-round community favorite. Wildlife sightings are common, so keep an eye out for deer on your visit.

Parking info: Parking lot off Aberdeen St is open and plowed, Ball Ave entrance is open but not plowed

Ball Perkins Park (1675 Perkins Ave NE)

Ball Perkins Park is a lesser-known natural area on the City's Northeast side. Despite a relatively shorter trail, the wooded area and wetland overlook are a must-see in the winter.

Parking info: Entrance off Perkins Ave is open but not plowed.

Grand River Walk (from Sixth St Park to Leonard St.)

Looking for something closer to the heart of Grand Rapids? The paved multi-use trail along the east side of the Grand River will be plowed for use throughout the snowy season.

Parking info: Parking lots at Sixth Street and Canal Parks are open and plowed by Mobile GR and Parking Services.



Learn more about everything our parks have to offer in the winter at grandrapidsmi.gov/winterfun.



REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1

YOGA 🎯

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr ightarrow

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
		5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
BASIC YOGA	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R STUDIO	AMY K.
Discover your inner yogi in a class that builds strength and body awareness. Begin with gentle stretching and	WED	6:00 - 6:55 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
move to flowing through and holding poses. Class will come to a restful end.	THU	12:00 - 12:55 PM	P&R STUDIO	MELISSA T.
	SAT	9:00 - 9:55 AM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
GENTLE YOGA A balanced practice that will center you, leaving your body feeling open and relaxed. Basic poses and a slower flow unlock body tension, strengthen your core and help you tune into personal peace.	TUE THU	9:15 - 10:10 AM 9:15 - 10:10 AM	VIRTUAL VIRTUAL	TERRI S. TERRI S.
POWER YOGA This energetic class is designed to build strength, flexibility, and balance! Challenging peak poses, breath to movement flows, and mind body connections will encourage students to find their edge. Modifications are always offered and body awareness is always encouraged.	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
SLOW FLOW RESTORATIVE YOGA End your weekend and set the tone for the week ahead with this calming and gentle yoga class. Each class will begin and end with a variety of restorative postures, with a slow yoga flow in between. Find a cozy comfortable space, light a few candles, and grab as many blankets and pillows as you can!	SUN	7:00 - 7:55 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
VITAL MOVEMENT Strength, flexibility and balance are vital to our well-being. This class combines yoga stretches and poses (from the chair and standing only), along with light core work. No mat required. Perfect for anyone needing to stretch, improve their range of motion, or modify their practice as they recover from injuries. This class is great for any age, especially those 50+.	WED	9:15 - 10:10 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.

DANCE FITNESS

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7.

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
BEGINNER BALLROOM DANCING A beginner class targeted toward couples wanting to learn ballroom dancing. Learn the Salsa, Waltz, Foxtrot, East Coast Swing, Cha Cha, Rumba and Tango.	TUE	8:00 - 8:55 PM	P&R STUDIO	BYRON D.
GROOVE Sweat away stress and dance some joy into your heart while following simple steps and easy toning moves. Groove is perfect for anyone who wants to add some fun into their current workout routine.	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
HIGH FITNESS HIGH Fitness is an energetic, fun, fitness class that incorporates interval training with pop music, and easy- to-follow fitness choreography. This dance based class produces a high caloric burn and full-body toning through its carefully formulated choreography, alternating between intense cardio peaks and toning tracks. No equipment necessary, and options will be given for all fitness levels.	TUE	5:30 - 6:25 PM	P&R STUDIO	AHNA V.
WERQ WERQ is a nonstop cardio dance class with fun and unique routines set to the hottest pop and hip hop music. Participants will get a high calorie burn, and a non stop workout, combining repetitive athletic moves with fresh dance steps. Anyone can WERQ it!	WED	6:45 - 7:40 PM	P&R STUDIO	JEANNIE W.
ZUMBA Zumba is a high energy, dance fitness class that incorporates Latin and international music. All fitness levels are welcome.	MON THU	6:30 - 7:25 PM 6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R STUDIO VIRTUAL	AMY K. & BRI C. AMY K. & BRI C.
ZUMBA TONING Join master Zumba instructor Yeli Romero for an energetic, confidence-building Latin Zumba Fitness Toning class! Expect targeted body-sculpting exercises and high-energy cardio work with Latin-infused Zumba moves to create a calorie-torching, strength-training dance fitness party. This aerobic fitness toning program features movements using light weights (3lbs or less) performed primarily to Latin American dance music. So bring your weights and get ready to tone your arms, core, and lower body. All levels are welcome!	MON	6:00 - 6:55 PM	BAXTER CENTER	YELI R.

CARDIO & STRENGTH 🕒

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
BARRE Barre is a low impact, high intensity total body workout that incorporates elements of Pilates, Ballet and Yoga. This workout is fast paced and set to fun upbeat music. During the workout you will use light hand weights, resistance bands, and your own body weight. You will complete small range movements at high repetitions meant to fatigue your muscles to build strength and endurance, and then stretch everything out to increase your flexibility. Barre is a great workout for any fitness level as there are options to level up or down based on your own body. Barre is for EVERYBODY.	WED	5:45 - 6:40 PM	P&R STUDIO	LENOX N.
CORE CAMP Incorporate weight training and cardio blast intervals to keep your muscles and heart pumping. Combined with today's hottest music, this class is as much fun as it is effective.	TUE	5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	KRISTIN P.
CYCLING Reach your fitness goals while building leg and core strength. Powerful music and pace-setting instruction helps you climb steep hills, move across flat road and master intense intervals	MON TUE WED WED THU SAT	6:00 - 6:45 PM 5:45 - 6:30 PM 12:00 -12:45 PM 6:00 - 6:45 PM 5:30 - 6:15 PM 8:45 - 9:30 AM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO	CAROL S. MICHELLE D. PATRICK F. JULIE S. PATRICK F. MICHELLE D.

CARDIO & STRENGTH (CONT.)

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7.

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
PILATES Tone muscles, improve posture and learn flexibility and balance. Focus on moving as one unit with control and grace. Improve circulation, endurance and reduce stress.	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	GARFIELD GYM	ZIYAH D.
POUND® Using Ripstix®, lightly weighted drumsticks engineered specifically for exercising, POUND® transforms drumming into an incredibly effective way of working out. Instead of listening to music, you become the music in this exhilarating full-body workout that combines cardio, conditioning and strength training with yoga and pilates- inspired movements. Designed for all fitness levels, POUND® provides the perfect atmosphere for letting loose, getting energized, toning up and rockin' out! The workout is easily modifiable, and the alternative vibe and welcoming philosophy appeals to men and women of all ages and abilities. POUND® approved sticks required for everyone. Punch card holders must have their own Ripstix®. Ripstix® available at registration for \$20.	THU	5:30 - 6:15 PM	P&R STUDIO	KRISTIN P.
ROWING & TONING Rigorous full-body class combines rowing intervals with floor based strength and core exercises for the ultimate all-in-one, low impact cardio and strength workout. All levels welcome.	SAT	8:15 - 9:00 AM	P&R STUDIO	CAROL S.
STRONG NATION Strong Nation is a HIIT class (High Intensity Interval Training) that includes body weight strength exercises, fast cardio moves, plyometrics, and agility training. Music and moves sync together to help push you past your limits to reach your fitness goals.	MON WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM 6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R STUDIO VIRTUAL	АМҮ К. АМҮ К.
STRONG30 STRONG30 packs a total body workout into 30 minutes. It combines HIIT (high intensity interval training), body weight exercises, and cardio moves. In every class, the music and moves sync together in a way to help push you past your limits and reach your fitness goals.	SAT	9:00 - 9:30 AM	VIRTUAL	AMY K.
WATER AEROBICS Build core strength, conditioning, endurance and all-over toning. Class features deep and shallow water exercises. A great low/non-impact workout. Float belts are available. No class the week of April 4.	TUE THU SAT	6:00 - 6:55 PM 6:00 - 6:55 PM 9:00 - 9:55 AM	CITY HS POOL CITY HS POOL CITY HS POOL	KATHLEEN H. KATHLEEN H. KATHLEEN H.





PROGRAMS FOR AGES 50+

At Garfield Park Community Gym (2111 Madison Ave SE)

Programs for ages 50+ are back! Classes are ongoing and run Monday through Thursday from 10 am - 2 pm. All programs are **free** and open to the public.

Visit grandrapidsmi.gov/recreation or call 616-456-3696 for more information.

Programs include:

- Active Adults
- Stretch & Flex
- Pickleball
- Walking Club
- Knitting Club
- And more!

BRICKS 4 KIDZ 🗐

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
BRICKS 4 KIDZ: CRANIUM CONTRAPTIONS (GRADES K-5) Build and explore crazy contraptions that really work your brain. Students use LEGO® Bricks, axels, pulleys, gears and motors to create fun and interactive models. Compete with friends in a rousing game of Battle Tops or Foosball. Put your hand-eye coordination to the test with the Ping Pong Popper model. Experiment with the Mini Fig Mover to see how this model will send your mini fig for a ride. All this and more are waiting to be discovered as students learn and play with Cranium Contraptions! \$58/resident, \$68/nonresident.	MAR 1,8,15,22	4:30 - 5:45 PM	201 MARKET AVE	PIATT BRICKZ, LLC.
BRICKS 4 KIDZ: VIDEO GAME DESIGN (GRADES 3-6) This video game design series is SPACE themed! The ability to code is a key component of technology education today. Our coding program will teach students important strategies to enhance their logic and problem-solving skills, as well as help them work toward becoming technological innovators of tomorrow. Our program offers a skill level progression of coding concepts. Students will be introduced to basic coding with a fun, user-friendly coding software. \$70/resident , \$80/nonresident .	MAR 3,10,17,24	4:30 - 5:45 PM	201 MARKET AVE	PIATT BRICKZ, LLC.
BRICKS 4 KIDZ: TICKET TO RIDE (GRADES K-5) Delve into the history and mechanics of favorite amusement park rides in this imaginative unit. Students will construct a Carousel Swing, Tilt a Whirl, Loop de Loop ride, Swing boat ride, and/or Merry Go Round. Lessons incorporate principles of physics, described in a way children can understand, such as "G-force" inertia and momentum, as well as math concepts such as "there are 360 degrees in a circle". These engaging lessons will give students an understanding of the physical forces they experience every day. \$46/resident, \$56/nonresident.	APR 12,19,26	4:30 - 5:45 PM	201 MARKET AVE	PIATT BRICKZ, LLC.
BRICKS 4 KIDZ: WALKER BOT CLASS (GRADES 3-5) These bots are on the move! Some walk, some tumble, and some prepare to hop. Students will love finding out how their bot will move once they build it. They will then write a program using the WeDo 2.0 software to control their walker bots. Challenge questions will engage the programmers in critical thinking to determine how they can accomplish the goals. The models included in this fun 2-week unit are the Alien Hopper and Tumble Bot. Join us in building and programming these awesome bots! No experience necessary! \$50/resident, \$60/nonresident.	APR 14,21,28	4:30 - 5:45 PM	201 MARKET AVE	PIATT BRICKZ, LLC.

YOUTH DANCE

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

CLASS	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
BALLET/JAZZ COMBO (AGES 5-7) Gets kids up and moving! An upbeat class that explores jazz techniques and incorporates ballet. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	MAR 14 - APR 18	4:30 - 5:15 PM	201 MARKET AVE	OLIVIA O.
YOUTH BALLET (AGES 3-4) This class will develop coordination, balance and rhythm through basic ballet/tap moves and creative movement. Participants should wear ballet shoes. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	MAR 13 - APR 17	12:00 - 12:45 PM	201 MARKET AVE	OLIVIA O.

SWIM LESSONS 🥝

CLASSES RUN FOR 6-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7. NO CLASS WEEK OF APRIL 4. Register online:		er online: grandrap	oidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀
CLASS	DAYS	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)
PARENT/CHILD (6 MONTHS - 3 YEARS) Introduces water safety and basic swim skills to parents and children. Parents will learn skills to safely work with their child in the water, including how to correctly support/hold them in the water and how to encourage and motivate them through the learning process. Children will gain confidence in the water through games and songs and receive an introduction to swim foundations, like submerging and kicking. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	5:30 - 6:00 PM 10:00 - 10:30 AM	CITY HS POOL
PRESCHOOL 1 (AGES 3-5) Introduces water safety and basic swim skills, which are the foundation of our curriculum. Children will work with our instructors to gain confidence, develop positive attitudes around the water, and receive an introduction to swim foundations – like submerging, floating, and the movements of front and back crawl. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	5:30 - 6:00 PM 10:00 - 10:30 AM	CITY HS POOL
PRESCHOOL 2 (AGES 3-5) Builds upon the skills introduced in Pre-school Level 1. Children will continue to develop a positive relationship with the water while mastering swim foundations – like floating, submerging, and the basics of front and back crawl. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	5:30 - 6:00 PM 10:00 - 10:30 AM	CITY HS POOL
YOUTH LEVEL 1 (AGES 6+) Skills overlap with those learned in Preschool 1 and Preschool 2. Aimed at a slightly older audience, this class develops positive relationships with the water while mastering swim foundations like floating, submerging, and the basics of front and back crawl. At the end, participants will be able to perform swim foundations independently or with minimal assistance. \$42/resident , \$52/nonresident .	TUE SAT	6:15 - 7:00 PM 10:45 - 11:30 AM	CITY HS POOL

SWIM LESSONS (CONT.) 🐼

CLASSES RUN FOR 6-WEEK SESSIONS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7. NO CLASS WEEK OF APRIL 4.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 🔀

WEAREGR

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1

CLASS	DAYS	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)
YOUTH LEVEL 2 (AGES 6+) Builds upon the foundations laid in Level 1 to support the correct execution of foundational swim skills. Focuses on proper technique of foundational skills to ensure participants are strong and capable in the water independently. Repetition is used to build endurance and muscle memory. Participants will learn how to float, glide and move forward in the water with no support and will continue to develop the foundations for future swim strokes. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	6:15 – 7:00 PM 10:45 - 11:30 AM	CITY HS POOL
YOUTH LEVEL 3 (AGES 6+) Aims to increase proficiency of previously learned skills through additional guided practice with an emphasis on technique. Participants will learn and practice survival floating and improve their front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, and elementary backstroke technique while swimming longer distances. Participants will also learn safe headfirst entries and begin learning the foundations of butterfly. After successfully completing Level 3, participants will have achieved basic, independent water competency in a pool environment. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	6:15 – 7:00 PM 10:45 - 11:30 AM	CITY HS POOL
YOUTH LEVEL 4 (AGES 6+) Participants will improve their technique and increase endurance in previously learned strokes. Swimmers will gain better control over front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke and will continue to learn butterfly foundations. Emphasis will be placed on headfirst entries and swimming underwater to provide the basic skillset for competitive swimming. After successfully completing Level 4, swimmers will be well equipped with the skills needed to transition to a swim team setting. \$42/resident, \$52/nonresident.	TUE SAT	6:15 - 7:00 PM 10:45 - 11:30 AM	CITY HS POOL

FREE LIFEGUARD CERTIFICATION COURSES



OVERVIEW

We're hiring lifeguards now for summer 2022. When you work for Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation, you'll get the training you need for free and receive a 2-year American Red Cross lifeguarding certification.

Upon completion of this course, you will be guaranteed summer employment for the 2022 pool season at one of Grand Rapids' three public pools. These jobs offer competitive wages, flexible hours, and a rewarding experience serving Grand Rapids community members.

DATES

Certification courses last three days. Friday sessions will take place in the afternoon after school hours. Saturday and Sunday sessions will last most of the day.

- February 25-27
- March 18-20
- April 22-24

COST

The course is **completely free** if you plan to work as a lifeguard for the 2022 pool season. If you don't end up working for us, you will be responsible to pay for the certification.

Pre-registration required.

Learn more at grandrapidsmi.gov/aquatics or call 616.456.3696, option 1



YOUTH - SPRING SOCCER 😔

QUICK INFO

- Practices begin week of April 11
- Games begin April 23
- · Each team practices for one hour per week

• Each team plays one game per week on Saturdays

Children of all abilities are welcome to play

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 15

RESIDENTS: \$45, NONRESIDENTS: \$55 (REGISTER BY MARCH 15 TO AVOID LATE FEES)

ONLINE

grandrapidsmi.gov Search "soccer'

616.456.3696 Option #1

BY PHONE

IN PERSON

201 Market Ave SW

Grand Rapids, MI



January 2022

Visit any of the Grand Rapids Public Library's 8 locations

Main Library

111 Library Street NE = 49503 616.988.5400

Madison Square Branch 1201 Madison SE = 49507 616.988.5411

Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE = 49506 616.988.5412

Seymour Branch 2350 Eastern SE ■ 49507 616.988.5413

Van Belkum Branch 1563 Plainfield NE ■ 49505 616.988.5410

West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW = 49504 616.988.5416

West Side Branch 713 Bridge NW = 49504 616.988.5414

Yankee Clipper Branch 2025 Leonard NE = 49505 616.988.5415

For more information and hours, visit www.grpl.org.



616.988.5400 • www.grpl.org

Seniors Be Well at GRPL

Join us for the Seniors Be Well at GRPL series! Family Medicine physicians and community service providers will discuss health misinformation, nutrition, dementia and much more. When you sign up for the book club, you will receive the book to read, discuss, and keep for your personal library! Seniors Be Well at GRPL is a partnership with Mercy Health Saint Mary's.

All talks will be available virtually and in Spanish translation. Register at www.grpl.org/register, at any GRPL location, or by calling 616-988-5400.

Ways to sign up:

Online – www.grpl.org/seniorsbewell
 In Person – Visit any GRPL location
 On the phone 616-988-5400

Ask-a-Doctor and Ask-a-Lawyer about Advance Care Planning

Thursday, January 20, 2022 Main Library – 111 Library St NE 11:00 am | Presentation by Claire Belevender MD, Gregory Hodge, Elder Law Firm PC 12:30 pm | Exercise Class 2:00 pm | Book Club on *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande

Grief, Stress Management, and Mood (Mental Health Issues) Thursday, February 24, 2022

Main Library – 111 Library St NE 11:00 am | Presentation by Sarna Becker MD 12:30 pm | Exercise Class 2:00 pm | Book Club on The *Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion

Atul Gawande Being Mortal Macketer di Wat Matters in the Earl

Decreased Appetite, Nutrition, and Fall Prevention

Thursday, March 24, 2022 Main Library – 111 Library St NE 11:00 am | Presentation by Nolan Coallier MD 12:30 pm | Exercise Class 2:00 pm | Book Club on *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver

Senior Preventative Care and Community Health Resources

Thursday, April 21, 2022 Main Library – 111 Library St NE 11:00 am | Presentation by Kellie Clark MD, Stephanie Hecksel, & Area Agency on Aging

Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard NE 12:30 pm | Exercise Class 2:00 pm | Book Club on *Extra Life: Short History of Living Longer* by Steven Johnson

Caregiver Expo

Sunday, April 24, 2022 Main Library – 111 Library St NE 1:00 – 5:00 pm

- Family Medicine Residents
- Area Agency on Aging West Michigan
- Alzheimer's Association
- Elder Abuse Coalition
 - Hope Network Side by Side Day Program
- Home Repair Services
- Legal Aid of West Michigan
- Michigan Medicare/Medicaid
- African American Health Institute
- Elder Law Firm
- Faith Hospice
- Red Cross

This program is being funded by Region 6 of the Network of the National Library of Medicine, whose mission is to provide U.S. researchers, health professionals, public health workforce, educators, and the public with equal access to biomedical and health information resources and data.



Enter the Annual Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition

The Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition is open to poets ages 5 through adult who live in Kent County. Submissions are accepted every February and winners are notified in the spring. Winners have their poems published in *Voices*, receive a cash award, and take part in a reading in June.

About the Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition

- FREE to enter
- CASH prizes
- PUBLICATION in the annual literary journal, *Voices*

- WINNERS read poems at the Awards Reading held during Grand Rapids' Festival of the Arts in June
- OPEN to Kent County, Michigan residents of all ages and students attending classes within Kent County including GVSU
- NATIONAL JUDGE
 José Olivarez

How to Enter

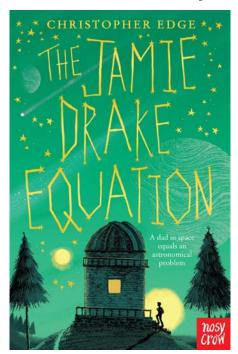
- Submissions will be accepted February 1 28, 2022.
- Visit www.grpl.org/dyer-ives for submission guidelines.



José Olivarez



The One Book, One City for Kids 2022 Selection



About the program

One Book, One City for Kids is an annual reading program that encourages 5th grade students to read and discuss the same book. The program also helps to develop a lifelong love of reading among school-age readers, to inspire readers to bring story ideas and themes to life through discussion and creative reactions, and to build collaborative ties between public libraries, school libraries and area schools.

About the book The Jamie Drake Equation

How amazing would it be to have a dad who's an astronaut? Rocket launches, zero gravity, and flying through space like a superhero! Jamie Drake's dad is orbiting the Earth in the International Space Station and Jamie ought to think it's cool but he just really misses him . . .

Hanging out at his local observatory, Jamie picks up a strange signal on his phone. It looks like alien life is getting closer to home. But space is a dangerous place and when his dad's mission goes wrong, can Jamie prove that he's a hero too?

A cosmic adventure for anyone who's ever looked at the stars.



Meet the Author Christopher Edge

Christopher Edge is an award-winning children's author whose books have been translated into more than twenty languages.

His novel *The Infinite Lives of Maisie Day* won the STEAM Children's Book Prize and his last four novels were all nominated for the prestigious CILIP Carnegie Medal.

Before becoming a writer, he worked as an English teacher, editor and publisher — any job that let him keep a book close to hand. He grew up in Manchester, England where he spent most of his childhood in the local library dreaming up stories. He now lives in Gloucestershire, England with his wife and family, close to his local library where he still spends a lot of his time dreaming up stories.

One Book, One City for Kids Author Talk: Christopher Edge

Friday, March 25, 2022, 4:00 – 5:00 pm Virtual Event | Zoom

Meet Christopher Edge, the author of *The Jamie Drake Equation*, the 2022 One Book, One City for Kids selection. Christopher will discuss his book, how he wrote it, and will answer questions from the audience during this live online event.

Sponsors:

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Doug and Maria DeVos Foundation Fund Edsko and Claire Hekman Family Fund





Winter & Spring Storytimes

Family Time

Parents and caregivers are invited to bring their children ages 18 months to 5 years to this storytime featuring great books, songs, fingerplays, and hands-on fun. Classes end with a creative art activity. Attendance is limited to 20 attendees at our Main Library and 15 attendees at our Yankee Clipper Branch to ensure safe social distancing. Masks required for all attendees ages 2 and above.

Mondays, January 24 – March 28, 2022 10:30 am | Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Thursdays, January 27 – March 31, 2022 10:30 am | Yankee Clipper – 2025 Leonard NE

Virtual Family Time

Join GRPL on Zoom for a special virtual edition of our Family Time series. Parents and caregivers are invited to bring their children ages 18 months to 5 years to this online storytime featuring great books, songs, fingerplays, and fun. Registration required: www.grpl.org.

Wednesdays, January 26 – March 30, 2022 10:30 am | Zoom

Spring Fun on the Lawn

Join us for outside fun! Come sing, dance, and play outside on our Library on the Lawn. For ages 0-5. Weather permitting.

Mondays, April 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022 10:30 am | Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Wednesdays, April 6, 13, 20, 27, 2022 10:30 am | Seymour Branch – 2350 Eastern SE

Thursdays, April 7, 14, 21, 28, 2022 10:30 am | Yankee Clipper Branch 2025 Leonard NE



Library News

WEAREGR

January 2022

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616.988.5400 - WWW.GRPL.ORG

Grand Rapids History Center Debuts at GRPL

The Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department at the Grand Rapids Public Library has been rebranded as the Grand Rapids History Center.

The Grand Rapids History Center is located on Level 4 of the Main Library. Its mission is to collect, preserve and share the history of Grand Rapids. The History Center includes the following:



Archives — Original and unique items like photographs, scrapbooks, maps, diaries, reports, oral histories, business records, furniture catalogs

Local History — Books, newspapers, magazines, and subject files about Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the Midwest



Genealogy — Databases and books for family history research (local, national, and international)

Rare Books — Volumes that are valuable, rare, or notable. Strengths include gardening and landscape architecture; maps; and angling (fishing)

Furniture Design Collection — One of the largest in the nation. Books, folios, and periodicals on furniture design and decorative arts

"We are changing the name to Grand Rapids History Center to be friendlier and more approachable," remarked Julie Tabberer, the Center's manager. "The new name is easier to understand, say, and remember. There have been many different names over the years: Grand Rapids History & Special Collections, local history, genealogy, archives, and the Michigan Room. The new name—Grand Rapids History Center—concisely encompasses all we do."

The Grand Rapids History Center is free to use and is open during library hours. Digital collections and research material is also available online at www.grpl.org/history. For more information call 616-988-5400 or email at localhistory@grpl.org.



Digital Database Spotlight: Education & Test Preparation



Studying for a big test? These free, online databases can help. Grab your GRPL library card and visit www.grpl.org/research to get started.

Driving-Tests.org

- A driver's education resource offering state specific practice tests
- Includes motorcycle and CDL (Commercial Driver's License) tests
- Offers FAQ section with detailed answers on DMV related questions

Learning Express Library

- Test preparation materials and interactive practice exams based on official tests
- Includes ASVAB, SAT, ACT, GED
 Preparation, Firefighter, Police Officer,
 Postal Worker, U.S. Citizenship, and
 improvement tests for students from
 elementary school through college

LinkedIn Learning (formally Lynda.com)

Choose from thousands of online courses to learn in-demand skills from real-world industry experts

Vocational Studies Premier

- Designed specifically for the research needs of two-year colleges
- Scholarly content most relevant to vocational programs
- Wide range of subjects covered including counseling, biotechnology, cosmetology, fashion design, forensics, graphic arts, health information technology, law enforcement, and veterinary assistant

Black History Month 2022

February 1–28, 2022 | Celebrate Black History and Culture

Celebrate Black History Month with the Grand Rapids Public Library! Join us online February 1 –28, 2022 for programs for both kids and adults that highlight and celebrate our Black community. Visit www.grpl.org/blackhistory for more information.



Storytimes

Black History Month Storytimes

Saturdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26, 2022, 10:00 am

Virtual Event | GRPL's Facebook Page and YouTube Channel

Enjoy books featuring Black characters or that are by Black authors. Participate in sing-alongs, and early literacy tips from a GRPL librarian. Tune in weekly on GRPL's Facebook Page and YouTube Channel during the month of February.





Music (NOT) in the Stacks

Join us for a virtual performance featuring local musicians on GRPL's Facebook Page and YouTube channel.

Debra Perry and Majestic Praise Thursday, February 3, 2022, 7:00 pm

Debra Perry & Majestic Praise is a close knit group who shares the common thread of their faith. The members are from various ministries in the greater Grand Rapids area and include Vanessa Allen, Robert Kelly, Kelvin Jackson, Dorcas Jones, Marie Matthews, and Carolyn Allen.

Hey, Marco!

Thursday, February 10, 2022, 7:00 pm

Hey Marco is a jazz/pop ensemble from Grand Rapids who specializes in weaving intricate rhythm, melody, and harmony together with soaring vocals.

Kathy Lamar

Thursday, February 17, 2022, 7:00 pm

Vocalist Kathy Lamar sings a diverse blend of jazz, R&B, soul, and pop hits and delights audiences with her powerful voice and infectious laugh.

Asamu Johnson

Thursday, February 24, 2022, 7:00 pm

Unique and captivating, Asamu Johnson and his band have performed across the nation at various festivals, night clubs, and other venues.



Taste of Soul Sunday

Sunday, February 20, 2022, 1:00 – 2:30 pm Virtual Event | GRPL's Facebook Page and YouTube Channel

We're taking our popular Taste of Soul Sunday event online! Enjoy a series of free virtual events highlighting members of our community.



Community Conversation 1:00–1:30 pm

Join us for a community conversation about topics related to the Black experience in Grand Rapids.

Cooking with Daddy Pete's BBQ 1:30 – 2:00 pm

Learn how one of Grand Rapids' best-rated Black-owned barbecue restaurants keeps customers coming back for more with this immersive cooking session. Virtual program attendees will earn a Buy One, Get One free offer from Daddy Pete's BBQ that is good until February 27, 2022!



The Storytellers 2:00 – 2:30 pm

Join The Storytellers for a dynamic virtual experience combining stories, music, humor, and music. Enjoy lively Brazilian melodies, familiar American songs, Caribbean music, Australian didgeridoo tunes, West African rhythms, original compositions and much more! This event is designed for all ages.

Resources and Take-Home Kits



Black History Month Reading List We've compiled a list of titles that address the unique mental health challenges that Black people face. Browse the list. www.grpl.org/bhm-list.



Black History Month Craft Kits

These free take-home kits include age-appropriate crafts for toddlers and kids, and include information to help parents explain great moments in Black History in the United States. Request a kit by calling any GRPL location.

Black History Month Mindfulness Kits

These free take-home kits contain items for de-stressing, a StayWell resource guide, and suggestions for practicing mindfulness at home.

Craft kits and mindfulness kits can be picked up at any GRPL location. Available while supplies last.

Sponsors:







In This Issue:

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City of Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Public Library News - Section B

Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Programs - Section B

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Thanks to the generosity of our advertisers, this newsletter was funded using minimal taxpayer dollars.

ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

ACT NOW, ENROLL TODAY AT ENROLL.GRPS.ORG

MORE INFORMATION INSIDE!



ECRWSS Postal Customer



1994 Ottawa Hills graduate Stephanie Adams took the reins of the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation on Dec. 15 after four years as executive director of Friends of Grand Rapids Parks

GRPS Foundation Announces New President

Stephanie Adams, a 1994 Ottawa Hills graduate, started Dec. 15

By Phil DeHaan, Courtesy of School News Network

The next president and chief executive officer of the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation made a homecoming. Stephanie Adams is a 1994 graduate of Ottawa Hills High School and took the reins of the GRPSF on December 15 after four years as executive director of Friends of Grand Rapids Parks.

GRPS Superintendent Leadriane Roby couldn't wait.

"Stephanie brings a whole new level of energy, excitement, experience and relevant personal connection to our schools," Roby said in a prepared statement.

For Adams, the feeling is mutual.

"I am absolutely thrilled to be accepting this opportunity," she said. "As an alum of Ottawa Hills, a Latina, an active member of the GR community, there is no greater pride than being able to raise money for our schools."

The foundation began almost three decades ago as a funding vehicle for district athletics. It has since grown to support programs and projects that impact every aspect of a GRPS student's education, and since 2003 has granted more than \$20 million through its fundraising efforts. Its purpose: "To exclusively raise, grow and steward funds and other community resources to support the Grand Rapids Public Schools for the benefit of its students."

As president and chief executive officer, Adams will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for fundraising, staffing, programs and administrative affairs and will report directly to the foundation's board of directors.

Madelaine Lane, GRPSF board president and an attorney at Warner Norcross + Judd, said Adams is a proven advocate for the Grand Rapids community, and, as a GRPS alum, "knows firsthand how important the foundation's mission is to help provide equitable resources for our next generation of community leaders—the students of GRPS."

Prior to her role at Friends of Grand Rapids Parks, Adams had positions in a variety of local non-profit and for-profit organizations, including the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University, the Salvation Army Kroc Center, West Michigan Center for Arts & Technology, Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids and the Grand Rapids Griffins.





Your College Journey - A6



Michigan College and University Directory - A8





On board with grace and courtesy are (from left) Raymond Setles, Mira Reidsma-Withrow, Makinna Henriques, Ruby Shoemaker and Ellery Evans

In a Contentious Time, Students Extend 'Grace and Courtesy'

Montessori philosophy helps address pandemic stress, anxiety

By Charles Honey, Courtesy of School News Network

It's a simple enough question, posed by teacher Michelle Holliday: What does grace and courtesy mean to you? But for the 27 fourth- through sixth-graders seated in a circle, it's an important one, delving into ideals that run through everything they learn and do at their school, Grand Rapids Montessori Academy.

"Grace and courtesy means you are respectful, and you know what's right and you do what's right," says Quinn Diehl in the morning meeting all Montessori classes hold.

Adds Ruby Shoemaker, "Grace and courtesy means that you are putting kindness first, and that you think about others."

Simply put, says Vincent Smith, "Having grace and courtesy means you're a decent person."

It may sound like an obvious value to instill in students. But in a contentious time, the Montessori ethos of grace and courtesy stands out as a refreshing example of how students can get along when many adults seemingly cannot.

In this morning meeting held daily, Holliday's students model respectful behaviors that have been instilled in them since preschool, "taking ownership of how to start their day," says Holliday, in her 14th year of Montessori teaching.

"It really is something that is constantly practiced. The point is that the children are given direction, and then leadership opportunities to do it themselves."

Apt Approach for the Moment

The pre-K-6 school on College Avenue NE is part of a downtown Montessori campus that includes a section of Innovation Central High School, serving about 590 students from grades pre-K through 12. North Park and Ridgemoor Park schools also provide Montessori education in a fast-growing GRPS program that enrolls 1,260 students. the Montessori method encompasses tangible objects, multi-age classrooms and student-directed work. Now employed in about 5,000 U.S. schools serving over 1 million children, the Montessori way promotes values of community, peace and justice, and active attention to grace and courtesy — guideposts for everything from conflict resolution to how students should walk around others working in class.

It's a philosophy, advocates say, well-suited to helping students navigate the anxiety of the pandemic and a highly polarized culture, where issues like mask-wearing and teaching about racism have sometimes become pitched battles.



Students work on division skills using tangible objects, part of the Montessori method

For students who were working largely from home last year, the return to in-person classes this fall has created a kind of "hypervigilance," says Daniel Morse, Grand Rapids Montessori assistant principal.

"Coming back to this environment with so many people after being away for so long is overwhelming for a lot of people," Morse says. "That's why we're underlining such a need both for students

WEAREGR January 2022

Grand Rapids Public Schools

WEAREGR

January 2022 Grand Rapids Board of Education

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Title IX Annual Athletics Compliance Report: Grand Rapids Public Schools is committed to securing athletic equity and provides annual Title IX reporting to the athletes and parents in an effort to bring increased attention and resources towards ensuring that gender equity as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments for 1972, Grand Rapids Public Schools annual report is available at www.grps.org.

To comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers.

Please contact Micky Savage, Director of Human Resources, in Human Resources via email savagem@ grps.org or at (616) 819-2028.

WE ARE GR

is published four times per year by GRPS Communications Office Grand Rapids Public Schools 1331 Franklin St. SE, P.O. Box 117 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501-0117 Phone: (616) 819-2149 Fax: (616) 819-249 Fax: (616) 819-3480 www.grps.org www.WeAreGR.com John Helmholdt, *Executive Director of Communications & External Affairs* Kaitlyn Califf, *Webmaster & Multimedia Designer* Javier Cervantes, *Communications Coordinator* Lynn Ritsema, *Executive Assistant*

Developed in 1907 by Italian educator Maria Montessori,

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and adults to focus on the grace and courtesy ideals."

That means giving grace to others who make mistakes, doing favors and using kind language, he adds: "Because let's be honest, if it was tough for us adults to go through this pandemic, I can't imagine what it's like for a student. It upends their whole world."

Intentionally incorporating grace and courtesy into daily lessons and personal interactions helps students deal with an intensely stressful time, adds Principal Kerri Reed.

"The goal is that we focus on having that communication, listening to each other, being able to speak respectfully to each other, and then having them be able to take that out into life and use that skill," says Reed, in her sixth year as principal. "You don't always have to agree. You can still be friends with this person."

Feeling Safe and Trusting Others

Some students from Holliday's class say the school helps them feel safe, trust others and resolve conflicts. Says fifth-grader Makinna Henriques, "It keeps me thinking people have loyalty in my trusting, and that I can tell them anything."

Sixth-grader Raymond Setles says grace and courtesy "puts peace of mind in the school." Without it, he adds, "I could have turned out (to be) somebody picking on a lot of people, or somebody could have turned out picking on me a lot."

For sixth-grader Ruby Shoemaker, attending Grand Rapids Montessori for a few years has changed how she thinks. "Now whenever I say something, I'll just think about, Is it nice? Is it something I should say? Is it going to be offensive?"



Ella Mutch takes a moment at the peace table, saying it 'calms me down'

Each room has a "peace table" where students can either go to calm down or work through an issue with another student. "If you get mad at someone, you can always go to the peace table and try to resolve your problems," says sixth-grader Mira Reidsma-Withrow.

Returning to in-person learning full-time is a plus, the students agree, even with mandatory masks. While Raymond finds them annoying, others like Ellery Evans say they don't mind.

Working from home last year, fourth-grader Ellery says, "It was kind of stressful for me to do all this stuff. I had to do a lot of assignments. Now that I'm just in person, I feel much better.

"Yes, we're still wearing masks, but I'm getting really used to them," she adds. "Now it just feels like I don't have a mask on anymore."

Discussing Happiness and Compostable Plates

Earlier, these students had taken part in the morning meeting, where they and their classmates acknowledged one another's good qualities and discussed the nature of happiness. Sixth-grader Ava Najdowski also updated them on a petition drive to bring back compostable cafeteria plates as part of the school's partnership with Groundswell.

Quinn Diehl read a passage from "Today I Will," a book of daily insights and advice, about how happy experiences like sports championships are transitory. Students weighed in, including Quinn himself.

"I think it means that even that happiness fades, even when you think it will never fade," he says.

Ella Mutch ventures that it's more about not being a sore loser. "If you're a sore loser, you don't enjoy the good moments."

Ruby Shoemaker offers a reflection that seems apropos not just to her class, but to the uncertain state of the world.

"I think it's really just about valuing your time, but also being in the moment instead of thinking about the past or the future," she says. "Just be in the moment."

Montessori Principal Kerri Reed, left, and Assistant Principal Daniel Morse show off their school's T-shirts promoting growth, responsibility, acceptance, courtesy and empathy



Comforting objects help students work through stress and conflict at the peace table; each classroom has one



Teacher Michelle Holliday makes a point to the class during their morning meeting, while (from her left) students Raymond Setles, Julian Deubner, Makinna Henriques and Hiliana Lopez follow along

GRPS News

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WEAREGR

40+ SCHOOLS. ONE DISTRICT. YOUR CHOICE.

GRPS is proud to offer the region's largest, most comprehensive selection of school choices in all of West Michigan including neighborhood schools, theme schools, and more. With over 40 schools in one dynamic district, we take pride in preparing our students for the real world.

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Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy Achieves Distinguished Designation

PK-6 theme school becomes one of only two schools in Kent County to earn International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme designation

Grand Rapids Public Schools announced today that Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy has officially been designated as an International Baccalaureate World School for the Primary Years Programme, making it one of only two in Kent County (Coit Creative Arts Academy being the other) and 26th overall in the state to achieve this level. For more than 50 years, International Baccalaureate (IB) has been recognized as the global leader in providing international education curriculum programs and is known for its rigorous application process.

"The International Baccalaureate designation is recognized as the best-of-the-best for K-12 education," said Dr. Leadriane Roby, Superintendent of Schools. "Sherwood Park joins Coit Creative Arts Academy as a shining example in the county for their commitment to delivering high-quality programs of international education for our elementary age scholars." IB offers four programmes, each focused on specific age groups. The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is for children ages 3 to 12. PYP focuses on nurturing and developing young students as caring, active participants in the lifelong journey of learning through a student-centered approach to education. The PYP also encourages developing student connections to the local and global community and expression through the arts.

"IB and Sherwood Park share a common commitment to improve the teaching and learning of a diverse and inclusive community of scholars by delivering challenging, high-quality programmes of international education," said Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy principal Sherrie Ross. "The real payoff will be evident when these scholars enter adulthood and undertake activities that enhance their social, cultural, and economic environments. I can't wait to see where life takes our Sherwood children!" Sherwood Park joins Coit Creative Arts Academy as the only two IB PYP schools in Kent County. City High Middle School was the region's first IB Middle Years and Diploma Programme.

Sherwood is a PK-6 theme school that offers an educational program that focuses on language and global studies. It is one of 12 GRPS theme schools, each with customized curriculum and unique academic offerings centered around a certain theme (i.e., environmental science, arts/music, Montessori, dual-immersion, college prep, etc.). Applications are required and available at apply.grps.org.

Grand Rapids Public Schools is appreciative of the Frey Foundation's financial support for the IB program at Sherwood.

Asbestos Notice

Asbestos is a general name for a group of naturally occurring minerals composed of small fibers. These fibers are very strong and resistant to heat and chemicals. The mere presence of asbestos in a building does not mean that the health of the building occupants is endangered. When left intact and undisturbed, asbestos-containing materials do not pose a health risk to building occupants. There is, however, the potential for exposure when the material becomes damaged or disturbed. Because of these problems associated with asbestos exposure, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act, or AHERA emphasizes that asbestos in school buildings must appropriately be managed.

The Grand Rapids Public Schools has an asbestos management plan that addresses contact persons, training, inspections, response actions, operation and maintenance

activities, periodic surveillance, cleaning, disclosure efforts, and school building areas containing asbestos. Any person may review the management plan at the Grand Rapids Public Schools' Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, during regular business house (8:00 am to 4:00 pm). Plans may also be found on the district's website at www.grps.org/facilities-asbestos-info. Alternatively, any person may request a copy of the plan by writing the Grand Rapids Public Schools Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. There is a cost involved in reproducing the document of approximately 10 cents per page. The Grand Rapids Public Schools will send a copy out of the management plan within 5 business days of receiving the request.

GRPS

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION JOURNEY BEGINS AT GRPS

Planning for college can seem like an overwhelming task. From applications to enrollment, there are lots of steps along the way—and each of them are important! Grand Rapids Public Schools is here to help our scholars successfully navigate this process starting in the fall of their Junior year and beyond.

WEAREGR

GRPS News

1TH GRADE • FALL • SETTING YOUR COURSE

- Make a list of your abilities, interests, and what you may want to study in college.
- Learn about different colleges and the features that interest you.
- Ask your counselor about college fairs, college visits, and websites to explore.
- Take your SAT preparation seriously! Get in extra practice.
- Create your College Board account.
- Look for opportunities to take AP courses and dual enrollment.

11TH GRADE • SPRING/SUMMER • GATHERING TOOLS

- Come up with a list of 3-5 colleges you plan on applying to in the fall.
- Take the spring SAT!
- Create a Parchment account at <u>parchment.com</u>
- Create your FSA ID
- Ask for letters of recommendation from 2 professional adults that you can use for your applications next year.
- Create a resumé to start using for applications.
- Get involved! Find a job, volunteer, participate in a summer camp or summer college program.
- Schedule campus visits with family or programs like TRIO Upward Bound.

12[™] GRADE ○ FALL ○ STAYING THE COURSE

□ **Finalize your list of colleges.** Focus on 3-5 and be sure to note the application deadlines.

Continue to visit college campuses!

- To improve your SAT score, sign up for a SAT retake.
- Apply to college! Make sure your transcripts and SAT scores are sent to each college.
- Complete the FAFSA® application.
- Apply for additional scholarships!

12^{TH} grade \circ fall \circ reaching your destination

- Visit the colleges you've been accepted to (if you haven't already) in order to help with your final decision.
- Notify your college or university of choice by May 1.
- ☐ Ask your counselor to send your final transcript to your enrolling university during the final 2 weeks of school.

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

- Set up your online student account.
- Review your Financial Aid Package and accept the aid you plan to use.
- Sign up for orientation.
- Identify the process for scheduling your classes.
- Select your housing and meal plans.
- Make sure tuition costs are fully paid for by the college/university's deadline!
- Once you're signed up for your classes, purchase the required textbooks for each class.





GRPS Again Wins State School Nutrition Award

Robin Bieschke is SNAM employee of the year

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

For the second straight year, a Grand Rapids Public Schools food and nutrition services employee has won top honors from the School Nutrition Association of Michigan.

Robin Bieschke, the kitchen manager at Westwood Middle School, was named the association's Employee of the Year. She's in her 21st year at GRPS and seventh year at Westwood Middle School.

Phillip Greene, the director of the district's Nutrition Services department, said Bieschke is more than deserving of the honor, which follows Renee Crampton's Manager of the Year award last year.

He noted that Bieschke is a visible presence at Westwood who greets students as they enter the cafeteria and walks around during mealtimes, encouraging students to try new items. He and Bieschke also worked together to update the school's serving area with new signs and banners to promote healthy eating.

"She understands the students," he added. "And she takes pride in the presentation of the food."

Bieschke, a Comstock Park High School graduate who has worked in some type of food service since age 16, said the pride comes from a sense of responsibility to her approximately 225 students.

Cafeteria as Safe Place

"I absolutely love getting to know the kids, making them feel welcome and that the cafeteria is a safe place for them," she said. "I try to learn all their names and greet them by name every day. I love to hear when they like the food. But when serving something new I will walk around and ask how they like it, and I also love to hear their honest opinions, some even giving me tips on how it might be better."

In a typical week as kitchen manager Bieschke is responsible for all the ordering of food and supplies, does all necessary paperwork and cooks all of the hot food.

"We feed both breakfast and lunch," she said. "With the supply chain shortages it's been a struggle, but I still try to offer at least four meal choices a day. Two hot and two cold options."

She said she could not do what she does with her assistant cook, Ellie Flake.

"She is my right hand," Bieschke said. "She makes a beautiful salad bar. With Covid restrictions that means individually bagging or cupping all the items on the salad bar."

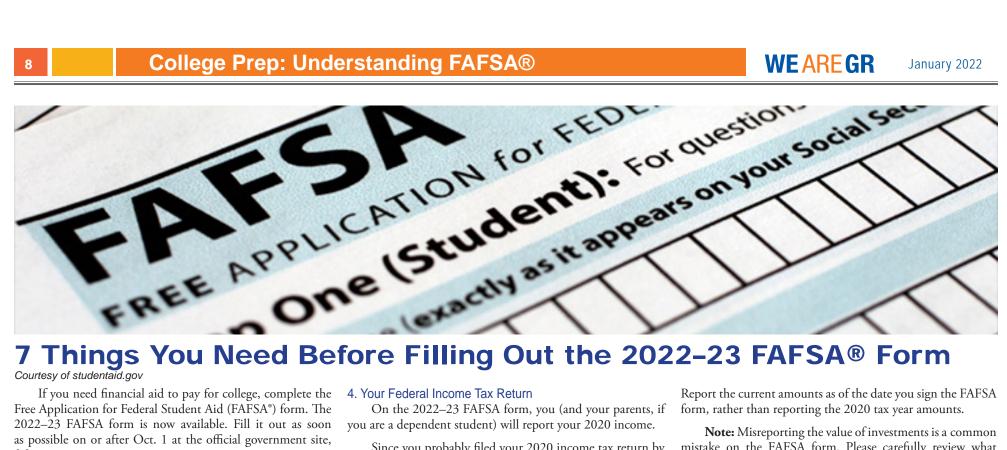
Covid, Bieschke added, has been tough for food service workers, custodians, bus drivers and many others who often feel underappreciated.

"I feel like all food service workers deserve an award like this for what we have done in the past couple of years and continue to do today with supply-chain shortages," she said. "And I hope that districts and the public realize what an important service we provide."

Count Greene among those who knows that what Bieschke provides is invaluable.

"Her positive attitude provides encouragement to other team members," he said. "She has a great sense of humor that helps to create a great work environment."

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7 Things You Need Before Filling Out the 2022-23 FAFSA® Form Courtesy of studentaid.gov

If you need financial aid to pay for college, complete the 4. Your Federal Income Tax Return Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form. The 2022-23 FAFSA form is now available. Fill it out as soon as possible on or after Oct. 1 at the official government site, fafsa.gov.

It's easier to complete the FAFSA form if you gather what you need ahead of time. Here are a few items to help you fill it out.

1. Your FSA ID

If you haven't done so already, create an FSA ID, which is your account username and password. The FSA ID is a digital legal signature that lets you complete and update the FAFSA form, so create your own and keep it safe. Parents of dependent students will need to use their own FSA ID to complete the FAFSA process. We recommend creating your account earlyeven before you're ready to complete the FAFSA form. This extra step can avoid delays in the process especially since it can take up to three days before you can use your FSA ID.

For step-by-step instructions, watch How to Create an FSA ID (Account Username and Password).

IMPORTANT: Do NOT create an FSA ID on someone else's behalf. This includes parents. A parent should not create an FSA ID for their children and a student should not create an FSA ID for his or her parents. It may cause issues signing and submitting the FAFSA form and lead to financial aid delays. (Also, it's against the rules.)

2. Your Social Security Number

You can find your Social Security number (SSN) on your Social Security card. If you don't have access to it, or you don't know where it is, you can request a new or replacement card from the Social Security Administration. If you are not a U.S. citizen, but meet other eligibility criteria for federal student aid, you'll also need your Alien Registration number. Both parents and students need this information for the FAFSA form.

3. Your Driver's License Number

You'll need to enter your driver's license on the FAFSA form. If you don't have a driver's license, then don't worry about this step.

you are a dependent student) will report your 2020 income.

Since you probably filed your 2020 income tax return by the time the FAFSA form is available, you may be eligible to transfer your tax information into the FAFSA form right away using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT).

- Not everyone is eligible to use the IRS DRT
- The IRS DRT does not input all the financial information required on the FAFSA form. Therefore, you should have your 2020 tax return and 2020 IRS W-2 available for reference.

The IRS DRT is the fastest, most accurate way to input your tax return information into the FAFSA form. To address security and privacy concerns related to the IRS DRT, the tax return information you transfer from the IRS will not display on fafsa.gov. Instead, you'll see "Transferred from the IRS" in the appropriate fields on fafsa.gov.

- You cannot use your 2021 tax information. We understand that for some families, 2020 income doesn't accurately reflect your current financial situation. If you experienced a reduction in income since the 2020 tax year, you should complete the FAFSA form with 2020 tax information. Then, contact the school where you plan to attend and explain and document the change in income. School officials can assess your situation and adjust your FAFSA form if warranted.
- You cannot update your 2022–23 FAFSA form with your 2021 tax information after filing the 2021 tax return. The 2022-23 FAFSA form requires 2020 information.

5. Records of Your Untaxed Income

The FAFSA questions about untaxed income, such as child support, interest income, and veterans' noneducation benefits may apply to you. On the 2022-23 FAFSA form, you'll report 2020 tax or calendar year information when asked these questions. Find specific details for parents and students.

6. Records of Your Assets (Money)

This section includes savings and checking account balances, as well as the value of investments, such as stocks, bonds, and real estate (excluding your primary residence.)

Report the current amounts as of the date you sign the FAFSA form, rather than reporting the 2020 tax year amounts.

Note: Misreporting the value of investments is a common mistake on the FAFSA form. Please carefully review what is and is not considered a student investment and parent investment to make sure you don't over- or under-report information. You may be surprised by what can (and cannot) be excluded.

7. List of the School(s) You Are Interested in Attending

Be sure to add any college you're considering, even if you haven't applied or been accepted yet.

- Even if it's only a slight chance you'll apply to a college, list the school on your FAFSA form. You can always remove a school later if you decide not to apply, but if you wait to add a school, you could miss out on financial aid.
- The schools you list on your FAFSA form will automatically receive your FAFSA results electronically. They will use your FAFSA information to determine the types and amounts of financial aid you may receive.
- If you add a school to your FAFSA form and later decide not to apply for admission to that school, that's OK! The school likely won't offer you aid until you've been accepted anyway.
- You can list up to 10 schools at a time on your FAFSA form. Find out what you can do when you apply to more than 10 schools.

TIP: Several states require you to list schools in a particular order to be considered for state aid. For instance, you might need to list a state school first. Find out whether your state has a requirement for the order in which you list schools on your FAFSA form.

Ready to start?

Once you're ready, you have several ways to complete the FAFSA form, including the fafsa.gov website or the myStudentAid mobile app. Using the app, you can fill out the FAFSA form safely and securely from your mobile device. The app also allows you to manage your account, view your federal student aid history and loan information, and more. The myStudentAid app is available from both the Apple App Store (iOS) and Google Play (Android).

Michigan Colleges & Universities

Public Four- Year Colleges and Universities

Non-Public Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Central Michigan University	989-774-4000	cmich.edu	Adrian College	800-877-2246	adrian.edu
Eastern Michigan University	734-487-1849	emich.edu	Albion College	517-629-1000	albion.edu
Ferris State University	231-591-2000	ferris.edu	Alma College	989-463-7111	alma.edu
Grand Valley State University	616-331-5000	gvsu.edu	Andrews University	269-471-7771	andrews.edu
Kendall College of Art & Design/Ferris	800-676-2787	kcad.edu	Aquinas College	616-632-8900	aquinas.edu
Lake Superior State University	906-632-6841	lssu.edu	Ave Maria College	239-280-2500	avemaria.edu
Michigan State University	517-355-1855	msu.edu	Baker College (multiple locations)	800-964-4299	baker.edu
Michigan Tech University	906-487-1885	mtu.edu	Calvin College	616-526-6000	calvin.edu
Northern Michigan University	906-227-1000	nmu.edu	Cleary University	800-686-1883	cleary.edu
Oakland University	248-370-2100	oakland.edu	College for Creative Studies	313-664-7400	collegeforcreativestudies.edu
Saginaw Valley State University	989-964-4000	svsu.edu	Concordia University	734-995-7300	cuaa.edu
University of Michigan- Ann Arbor	734-764-1817	umich.edu	Cornerstone University	616-949-5300	cornerstone.edu
University of Michigan- Dearborn	313-593-5000	umdearborn.edu	Davenport University	000 / 0/ 1/00	doucement adu
University of Michigan- Flint	810-762-3300	umflint.edu	(multiple locations)	800-686-1600	davenport.edu
Wayne State University	313-577-2424	wayne.edu	Finlandia University	906-482-5300	finlandia.edu
Western Michigan University	269-387-1000	wmich.edu	Grace Bible College	616-538-2330	gracechristian.edu
			Great Lakes Christian College	517-321-0242 x230	glcc.edu
Public Community Colleges	5		Hillsdale College	517-437-7341	hillsdale.edu
Alpena Community College	989-356-9021	discover.alpenacc.edu	Hope College	616-395-7000	hope.edu
Bay College	800-221-2001	baycollege.edu	Kalamazoo College	800-253-3602	kzoo.edu
Charles S. Mott Community College	810-762-0200	mcc.edu	Kettering University	810-762-9500	kettering.edu
Delta College	989-686-9000	delta.edu	Kuyper College	616-222-3000	kuyper.edu
Glen Oaks Community College	269-467-9945	glenoaks.edu	Lawrence Technological University	800-225-5588	ltu.edu
Gogebic Community College	906-932-4231	gogebic.edu	Madonna University	734-432-5300	madonna.edu
Grand Rapids Community College	616-234-4000	grcc.edu	Northwood University	800-622-9000	northwood.edu
Great Lakes Maritime Academy	231-995-1200	nmc.edu/maritime	Olivet College	800-456-7189	olivetcollege.edu
Henry Ford Community College	313-845-9600	hfcc.edu	Rochester College	248-218-2000	rc.edu
Jackson College	517-787-0800	jccmi.edu	Sacred Heart Major Seminary	313-883-8500	shms.edu
Kalamazoo Valley Community College	269-488-4400	kvcc.edu	Siena Heights University	800-521-0009	sienaheights.edu
Kellogg Community College	269-965-3931	kellogg.edu	Spring Arbor University	800-968-0011	arbor.edu
Kirtland Community College	989-275-6767	kirtland.edu	University of Detroit Mercy	313-993-1245	udmercy.edu
Lake Michigan College	269-927-1000	lakemichigancollge.edu			
Lansing Community College	800-644-4522	lcc.edu	The second second		
Macomb Community College	586-445-7999	macomb.edu			
Mid-Michigan Community College	989-386-6622	midmich.edu			
Monroe County Community College	734-242-7300	monroeccc.edu			
Montcalm Community College	989-328-2111	montcalm.edu		MORE ABOU	
Muskegon Community College	231-773-9131	muskegoncc.edu	MICHIGAN CO	ULLEGE OR U	INIVERSITY
North Central Michigan College	888-298-6605	ncmich.edu			
Northwestern Michigan College	231-995-1000	nmc.edu		DUR CHOICE	AI
Oakland Community College	248-341-2000	oaklandcc.edu		EGESTATS.O	RG/
St. Clair Community College	810-984-3881	sc4.edu			
Schoolcraft College	734-462-4400	schoolcraft.edu		<u>GES/MICHIC</u>	IAW/
Southwestern Michigan College	800-456-8675	swmich.edu			
Washtenaw Community College	734-973-3300	wccnet.edu			
Wayne County Community College	313-496-2600	wcccd.edu			
wayne county community conege	JIJ T/U-2000	wooda.odu			

Early Childhood

WEAREGR January 2022

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· Hands-on activities

opportunities

Family and Community Engagement (F.A.C.E.)

Parent University

If you haven't already, explore the Parent University website at <u>parents.grps.org</u>. This website contains Digital Learning links, Trending News, the Power Parent magazine, Parent University coursework, and K-12 Milestone videos.

Discover the Power Parent magazine. This publication targets parents and families with timely articles supporting student success. The January 2022 edition focuses on Literacy. Learn tips and strategies to support your children throughout their academic journey. In addition, browse the age-appropriate activities to encourage reading and learning at home.

Check out the Parent University calendar and register for courses, events, and family field trips. A variety of courses have been created to meet the needs of our families. You will find academic, lifestyle, health, cooking courses and more! Parent University courses will be offered throughout the entire 2021-2022 school year.

The Trending News section, located on the front page of Parent University, has up-to-date information for GRPS families.

Power Parent Magazine

Check out January's edition of Power Parent Magazine.

- Find a GRPS Parent Toolkit in NEED TO DO: GRPS Curriculum Resources and Supports.
- Uncover Literacy Resources to support early childhood

students in GOOD TO KNOW.

- Discover ELL Resources to support our English language learners in SETTING GOALS: English Language Learners.
- Learn strategies to build language and literacy skills in FAMILY CONVERSATIONS.
- Delve into CHECK IT OUT and gather information on ways to support elementary school students.
- Search NAVIGATING ACHIEVEMENT to learn ways to support middle and high school students.
- What were 2021's top children's books? Check out NETWORK FOR SUCCESS and find out!

Dr. Roby is Superintendent and a featured chef!

Dr. Roby, along with Mr. Roby, have partnered with F.A.C.E. to facilitate TASTE BUDDIES. Join them on February 2, 2022 and create Stop, Drop and Lasagna Roll-Ups. Registered families will receive meal prep bags and cookbooks prior to the cooking extravaganza. Each TASTE BUDDIES cookbook includes meal-time conversation starters, foodie jokes and riddles, and ways to incorporate language, literacy, and math into the kitchen.

Registration link: forms.gle/ipDzWGjQbdcj9dqj8

PALs - Parent Action Leaders

PALs are Parent Action Leaders who serve as liaisons

between families, schools, and GRPS. Every school has at least one PAL and they support their school families. To find a specific schools' PAL, go to <u>parents.grps.org</u>. Open the Power Parent magazine. Search Join a Parent Group on the right side of the magazine. Select the school and the PAL will be listed.

The PALs have continued to share their voices, opinions, and ideas with district leaders. In December - 2021, they met with Larry Oberst, CFO of Grand Rapids Public Schools, to discuss the district's Federal ESSER 3 funds. Parameters for the discussion included:

- Regaining student learning loss
- Mental health supports
- SEL learning supports
- Facility upgrades
- Additional athletic needs
- Other academic supports

F.A.C.E. in the Community

FACE is working closely with the Mitten Foundation and Pebble Creek Produce to facilitate "From Spore to Spoon". This engagement event will highlight healthy eating, scientific concepts, personal responsibility, and more! Each participating family will receive a fungal block to take home, grow, observe, and eat!

Registration link: forms.gle/8MNKBhvGSsWATucm9

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JOIN OUR TEAM! COME BE PART OF THE GRPS TRANSFORMATION

Are you ready:

To change the world? To work with children? To transform public education?

GRPS is looking to fill current and future vacancies for the 2022-2023 school year.

Positions include:

Teacher

- Clerical
- Food & Nutrition
- Paraprofessional
- Custodial/Maintenance
- Security & Safety
- Child Care Worker
- And More!

INTERESTED CANDIDATES MAY VIEW OPENINGS AND APPLY AT <u>CAREERS.GRPS.ORG</u>.

Finding Her Passion

Educator nominated for Teacher of the Year. two state awards

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

It was 12:15 on a Wednesday early afternoon at Union High School.

Nicole Durso stood in the hallway, outside her classroom door, meeting her Biology 1 students as they arrived for the 12:18 bell. Some were on their own. Others came in twos and threes.

Durso had a big smile, greeting, plus a fist or elbow bump for them. Students responded with their own smiles and often a friendly, "Hello, Miss."

A fellow staff member walked by and called out a hearty, "Congratulations!" to Durso. Behind her mask, Durso's eyes lit up and she replied, "Thanks, lady."

Durso intentionally begins class with greetings and encouragement.

"We greet our scholars at the door for a variety of reasons," she said. "We get a sense of their mood, and we ensure that we connect with each scholar daily. It's a great opportunity to make a positive connection and set that tone for the rest of the class period."

A GRPS Teacher of the Year Plus State Nominations

Music begins and ends class - provided by a designated class DJ.

The job rotates, but on this day the DJ's selections to start and finish class included favorite songs by artists such as Marca MP, Ozuna and Grupo Versza.

Durso also has adorned her room with motivational sayings, everyone from Juana Ines de la Cruz ("I don't study to know more but to ignore less") to Roberto Clemente ("If you have an opportunity to make things better and you don't, then you are wasting your time on Earth").

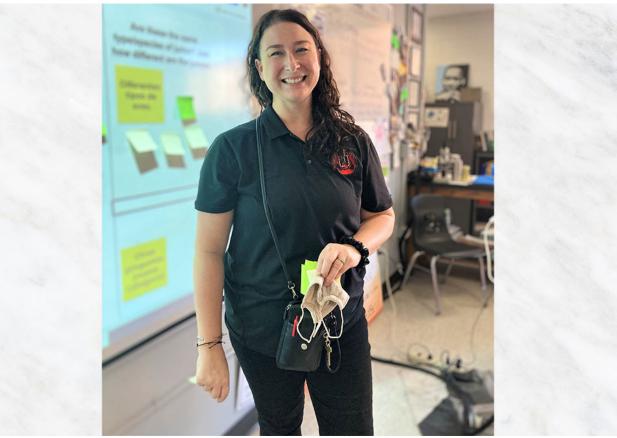
And around the edge of the room are numerous little lamps to create a softer, cozier feel.

Oh, that congratulations that got called out to her in the hallway by a passing colleague?

Two nights prior, Durso was named one of three Jean Hamilton Cope Teachers of the Year by Grand Rapids Public Schools. She was the honoree for high school, joining Buchanan Elementary second-grade teacher Jill Niewiadomski for grades PK-5 and Grand Rapids University Preparatory Academy sixth- and seventh-grade teacher Sherri Kraai for grades 6-8.

She now becomes a district nominee for the state's Teacher of the Year awards. She was also nominated for the Michigan Science High School Teacher of the Year for the Michigan Science Teachers' Association prior to earning the GRPS award and will learn the result of that nomination in 2022. A Strong Focus on Equity and Inclusion

District staff members nominate teachers for the annual GRPS awards, and a committee uses an extensive rating system to determine winners, including knowledge and use of effective instructional methods; passion for teaching and students' learning;



Union High School teacher Nicole Durso is one of three GRPS Teachers of the Year and nominated for two state teaching awards

leadership in and outside of the classroom; collaboration with colleagues, students and families; and advocacy for GRPS.

In nomination materials, Durso was lauded for leadership at Union and epitomizing the definition of a lifelong learner.

She is a teacher representative on the GRPS Equity and Inclusion Team and has helped organically grow an anti-bias and anti-racism team at Union High School with a grant from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, colleagues noted.

One nominator wrote: "She is a team player who can always be counted on. Most importantly, she is invested in our students and their futures. She cares deeply for our students and is willing to invest time in building relationships, implementing instructional strategies and tracking down necessary resources for their success."

A Strong Advocate

Students appreciate Durso's passion and investment in their futures.

"I think she is an amazing person," said junior Jenna Lewis, who has had Durso as a teacher and also is part of a garden club that Durso started at Union. "I am genuinely not a fan of gardening, but I joined her club, and I warmed up to gardening knowing the amount of time she took out of her days to plan things for us. She's an overall great person, and I haven't known a person yet that hasn't liked her."

Wendi Vogel, Kent ISD educational consultant in science, nominated Durso for the Michigan Science High School Teacher of the Year. Vogel taught Durso at Crestwood Middle School in Kentwood when Durso was a student.

She said Durso has taken a local leadership role in the

implementation of a science resource called iHub, a year-long biology curriculum.

"She currently runs a Facebook page for iHUB that has teachers from all over the nation connecting and supporting one another, and she hosted professional learning for me here at the ISD as well," Vogel noted. "She is a strong advocate for her students and believes they come to class with a lot to offer the classroom and the community. She exemplifies what it means to be a teacher-leader in science education."

From The B.O.B. to the Classroom

Such high praise makes Durso a little sheepish, and it's not anything she expected a decade or so ago when as an East Kentwood High School grad and Grand Valley State University student, she was waiting tables and working as a manager at The B.O.B. in downtown Grand Rapids, trying to figure out what might be next.

"It was during my undergrad days (at Grand Valley) and after graduation," she recalled. "I wasn't quite sure about what I wanted to do and being in the restaurant industry was a cool opportunity to work with people from all walks of life."

Her mom suggested that she volunteer at Blandford Nature Center. There she had a chance to plan educational opportunities for lots of school groups, including from Grand Rapids Public Schools. She was back on the road to teaching.

"It was during that time that I recognized education was my passion," she said. "I realized that I wanted to go back to school and pursue a teaching certificate."

She enrolled in the Graduate Teacher Certification program

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at Grand Valley, a one-year, full-time teacher training program that includes field placement in a local school.

She ended up at C.A. Frost Elementary, which, she noted, is right next door to Blandford and after graduation began at Union, just a mile and a half down the road.

She went on to earn a Master of Education in Literacy Studies degree with a TESOL emphasis and ESL endorsement from Grand Valley.

No Regrets

And, she said she hasn't looked back with regret since making the transition from the restaurant industry to education.

Standing in her classroom after a recent class she said with a smile: "I love it here."

During that 59-minute class, Durso kept her students on the move: first a quiz, then some group time watching a video about the junco bird, then a time together with the entire class in a circle for a discussion on the aforementioned video. The big block of time was broken into many smaller blocks, and together Durso and her 33 students took on the challenges of the Biology I curriculum.

Those 33 students in her fifth-hour Biology I class range in age from 14-18 and are in grades 9-11. Most are multi-language learners. First languages spoken include Spanish (and Mayan dialects), Kinyarwanda and Swahili.

Durso is pretty solid in conversational Spanish and spends much of the class each week speaking a blend of English and Spanish and even going to Google Translate on her phone when she needs a little extra help.

She also has Erika Curtiss, a Union ESL teacher, and Pascal Mugigi, a para-professional who speaks both Swahili and Kinyarwanda, to assist her, something she said is invaluable to her efforts in the classroom. The trio guides students through the curriculum.

"Together we figure out answers to our questions about relevant life science phenomena. We create and refine models to explain our thinking to others, we develop explanations and arguments, and we design solutions to pressing issues such as antibiotic resistance and climate change."

Chimes and a U for Full Attention

Durso commands the room with a friendly but no-nonsense demeanor. The students are interested, but many are young and coming off more than a year where they were not in classrooms in person.

So periodically Durso has to bring the class back to order using an Ehome solo chime or raising her hands in front of her head, palms facing her students, thumb tips touching in the shape of a U.

That gesture, she said, is ubiquitous at Union High School and came from Capturing Kids' Hearts training the school did when she arrived as a freshly minted Grand Valley grad in the summer of 2013.

"It's an attention-getting signal that respects students in that it allows them to finish their sentence if they are speaking," she said. "And it uses both my hands so that I give the students my full



Nicole Durso blends tech with a personal touch in her classrooms at Union High School



Nicole Durso has decorated her biology classroom at Union High School with a variety of elements meant to make students feel more comfortable

attention."

She smiles when asked if it might also be a metaphor for her full-attention approach to teaching.

"I definitely like the U as a metaphor for full attention and

being all-in," she said. "I think all scholars deserve an adult in every classroom that is fully present for them, especially post-pandemic. That's not always possible or easy, but it is something for which we can strive."

GRPS News

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WE ARE GR

2021-2022 GRPS EXTERNAL CALENDAR

Revised 1/19/2022

FEBRUARY - 2022	
ebruary 1	Middle School Girls Basketball, Wrestling & Bowling Practice Begins
ebruary 4	Theme School Application Period Closes (2nd round)
ebruary 5	Union High School Basketball Showcase (Union)
ebruary 5	Ottawa Hills Boys Swim Invitational (Ottawa Hills)
ebruary 9	COUNT DAY
ebruary 18	Half Day for Students (am); NO SCHOOL (pm)
ebruary 21	NO SCHOOL - Mid Winter Break; No LOOP Programming
MARCH - 2022	
March 11	End of 3rd Marking Period
March 14	NO SCHOOL - Records Flex Day; No LOOP Programming
March 15	Start of 4th Marking Period
March 24	GRPS Parent Action Leaders (PALs) Meeting (9:30-11:30 am & 5:30-7:30 pm)
APRIL - 2022	
April 1-8	NO SCHOOL - Spring Break; No LOOP Programming
April 11	Middle School Baseball, Softball, Co-Ed Track, Girls Soccer & Co-Ed Golf Practice
•	Begins
April 30	Elite Challenge Track Meet (Houseman Field)
MAY - 2022	
May 4-6	Senior Exams
May 6	PreK Here I Come
May 6	Senior Last Day of School
May 11	Last Day of Great Start Readiness PreK Program
May 17	CA Frost Environmental Science Middle High School Graduation (Houseman Field; 5:00 pm)
May 17	Innovation Central High School & Grand Rapids Montessori High School Graduation (Houseman Field; 7:30 pm)
May 18	Ottawa Hills High School Graduation (Houseman Field; 5:00 pm)
May 18	Museum High School Graduation (Houseman Field; 7:30 pm)
May 19	Grand Rapids University Preparatory Academy Graduation (Houseman Field; 5:00 pm)
May 19	Union High School Graduation (Houseman Field; 7:30 pm)
May 21	Collaborative Youth Fair
May 23	City High Middle School Graduation (Houseman Field; 6:30 pm)
May 26	Last Day of LOOP Programming
May 27	Half Day for Students (am); NO SCHOOL (pm)
May 30	NO SCHOOL - Non-Work Day
IUNE - 2022	
lune 6	Half Day for Students; Secondary Exams (am); NO SCHOOL - Records Flex (pm)
lune 7	Half Day for Students, Secondary Exams (am); NO SCHOOL - Records Flex (pm)
lune 8	Half Day for Students, Secondary Exams (am); NO SCHOOL - Records Flex (pm)
lune 8	End of 4th Marking Period
lune 8	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

Promise Neighborhoods Program Led by WMU Will Infuse Grand Rapids with Almost \$30 Million

Local organizations and educational institutions come together to support Southeast Side students

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

A decade-old program from the U.S. Department of Education that creates "Promise Neighborhoods" – places with great schools and strong supports for students – will infuse Grand Rapids with almost \$30 million over the next five years thanks to one of the largest grants in the history of Western Michigan University.

WMU education faculty Patricia Reeves and Jianping Shen were awarded \$29.5 million for the Grand Rapids Southeast Promise Neighborhood Project.

They will partner with a variety of Grand Rapids-based organizations to strengthen Grand Rapids Public Schools in a southeast quadrant of the city. The neighborhood being served by the grant includes one high school and a dozen feeder schools. Partners will include GRPS, Baxter Community Center, Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative, Family Futures, Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Valley State University, Kent ISD and LINC UP.

"Children are the future of our society," Shen said in a WMU statement. "Our team looks forward to working with partners in Grand Rapids to improve children's outcomes there."

Each year the project will serve about 9,500 children from birth to grade 12 in areas including "school readiness, literacy and math success, transitions to middle and high school, post-secondary preparation, and a variety of student and family health and security targets," according to the statement. It further aims to "add to the body of evidence of methods that can be used to improve all impoverished neighborhoods as well as their schools, children and students."

GRPS officials are thrilled by the grant, the partnerships it will fund and what the programs will mean for district students.

Superintendent Leadriane Roby earned her Ph.D. at WMU and said she is eager to partner with her alma mater and the other partner organizations in improving students' educational success.

"The Promise Neighborhoods grant will empower all of us to increase capacity for programming that will enhance our 'cradle-to-career' solutions," Roby said in the statement. "We are excited to roll up our sleeves and work collaboratively to improve developmental, educational and social outcomes for the children of Southeast Grand Rapids."

'A True Collective Impact'

Bridget Cheney, executive director of early childhood, elementary, and K-8 schools for GRPS, told School News Network that the district has already begun the initial planning for different sorts of programming that will be funded by the grant. Cheney said she and her colleagues are ecstatic about the "true collective impact" the grant will have on Grand Rapids.

"The model being used is designed intentionally to address areas of need," she said. "And it aims to increase cooperation, collaboration and alignment among and between the project partners.



Each year the project will serve about 9,500 children from birth to grade 12

"We are proud to be working alongside community partners in this endeavor," she continued. "That is a tremendous strength of the project. It is a true school and community support network in which children are at the center."

Since its inception in 2010 the vision of the Promise Neighborhoods project is that "all children and youth growing up in Promise Neighborhoods have access to great schools and strong systems of family and community support that will prepare them to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career."

John Helmholdt, spokesperson for GRPS, said schools being supported by the grant will include Ottawa Hills High School; Alger Middle School; Brookside, Campus, Congress, Grand Rapids Montessori Academy, Ken-O-Sha Park, Mulick Park, Ridgemoor Park Montessori Academy and Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy elementary schools; Dickinson Academy; Gerald R. Ford Academic Center; and Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy.

WMU noted that the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which has invested in Grand Rapids and built the prototype for the partnership, helped bring the cooperating organizations together for the project.

Yazeed Moore, a W.K. Kellogg Foundation program officer, said simply that the award will "ensure our community partners and stakeholders in the city have the support and resources they need to make sure all children, regardless of zip code and address, have the ability to succeed in school, work and life."



Dr. Jianping Shen (courtesy)



Dr. Patricia Reeves (courtesy)

Looking for the Right Spot

Student creates real-world computer programming experience in city parking

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

A frustrating experience trying to find parking ahead of a Grand Rapids Griffins hockey game set a City High junior down a path that may someday benefit others in a similar spot.

Vishnu Mano has been working for close to a year on what began simply as a school project, then morphed into an internship with the city through the Grow 1000 program and now, even after the internship has ended, remains a passion project Vishnu plans to continue to pursue in 2021-22.

The project is called Spotter, and it uses a microcontroller, ultrasonic sensors and code from two programming languages to help drivers quickly find an open parking spot in crowded cities.

His efforts are in the trial phase in a parking ramp at 50 Ottawa NW in Grand Rapids, and he hopes that someday what he's working on might be an option for parking spot seekers across the city.

The basic set-up is pretty simple. Two sensors are mounted on a small platform and connected to a microcontroller and a power supply. One sensor sends a wave out and if it hits a car, the wave returns to a second sensor which tells the chip to register the parking spot as taken in the accompanying app with a red X. If the wave doesn't return to the second sensor, then the parking spot is marked as available in green in the app.

The parts are cheap when purchased in bulk. The whole system can be put together for under \$2, Vishnu said.

The reason it works is a whole lot of coding by Vishnu, the gregarious son of two Indian immigrants, who said he began to take an interest in computers and what makes them run already in fourth grade.

Operating in Real-World Conditions

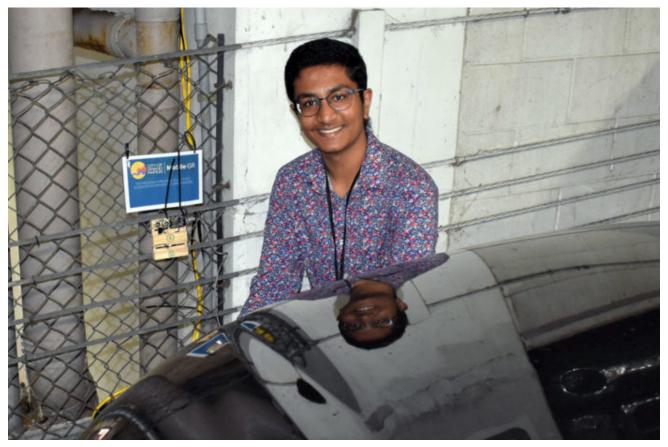
Already he has made major refinements to the system from when he first began in terms of both its size and accuracy. He has a few other tweaks in mind going forward, including looking at having each unit self-powered (currently they are plugged in). He's had two units in 50 Ottawa NW for about two months now and is using the in-the-field experience to figure out what's working well and what needs improvement.

"One thing we discovered is that with curved surfaces the wave could bounce up and not return, and then the spot would seem empty, but it wasn't," he recalled. "So, we fixed that with a bit of code."

A bit of code, in this case, is a bit of an understatement. Along with other programming languages, Vishnu is using a coding language often used for smart appliances such as fridges and dishwashers.

"My favorite part of programming," he said, "is the potential it gives you to impact your community in a positive way. Doing something real-world is definitely motivating."

Vishnu's passions are many. He's also a violinist with the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony and a state-champion debate team member, and he has a YouTube channel where he posts violin covers of classical Indian songs and tutorials on programming languages.



Vishnu Mano in a parking ramp at 50 Ottawa NW where he is field-testing hardware (mounted on the fencing to his right) that pairs with an app to make parking spots easier to find

Open Source Code Could Lead to Further Improvements

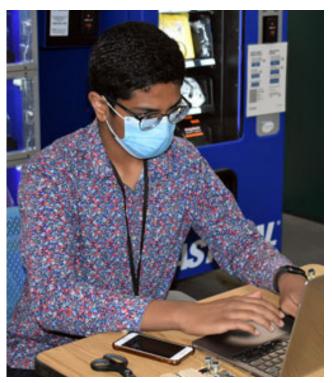
He's aready working on a next iteration of the system that will attempt to include new elements of the latest Apple operating system, specifically the code behind the Find My iPhone feature that now points people to their phone with visual cues.

"That code is now open source," he said with an excited smile. "I'm going to try to implement that."

Colin Cooper, one of his internship supervisors, said don't bet against him.

An information systems coordinator for Grand Rapids, Cooper oversees the selection, implementation and maintenance of department-level technologies, and he recalled how impressed he was when Vishnu reached out to his department by email in early 2021.

"After a Zoom meeting we knew he would be a great candidate for our internship program," Cooper recalled. "He was professional and organized, and we were excited to facilitate the opportunity for him to build out his idea. Working with Vishnu has been a great experience. His determination, attention to detail and tech-savvy serve him well, and I'm excited to see where these qualities take him in school and beyond."



City High junior Vishnu Mano first started programming in fourth grade and now is using his talents to try to make parking in cities easier