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ROLLING THUNDER

With bowling lanes open,
there's a new hangout on campus

For **Marlee Molanick**, a student in the College of Nursing, GCU's new Thunder Alley offers more than convenience.

It keeps her on campus more and fosters closer connections to classmates. More than that, it's just a cool place to hang out.

"It's so nice to have new places to eat, and the convenience store is awesome," says Molanick, 20, a junior from Phoenix. "I used to drive to Wal-Mart whenever I needed anything, which meant a 30-minute outing and giving up my parking spot. It was a major hassle and very time-consuming. Now, with Thunder Alley, I can stay on campus and take advantage of this great new facility."

In January 2011, Prescott Hall was in the works and GCU Arena was becoming a reality. University administrators knew campus enrollment would increase to nearly 4,000 by August, and they began to discuss additional services they could offer GCU's rapidly growing community.

That's when the concept and vision for Thunder Alley was born.

"We wanted to provide more campus dining options, a central location for students to gather for fun and a convenience store that was safe and truly convenient," says Campus Construction Manager **Charlie Sirokman**.

The plan for a dining and activities center where campus life would come together was immediately embraced, and GCU broke ground on the 30,000-square-foot facility in March. Construction crews spent the rest of the spring and summer hard at work, and by the first day of the fall semester, the first phase of Thunder Alley was complete.

Students were welcomed by an array of dining options in the new food court. Coffee, cookies, muffins, scones and pastries could be found at Jazzman's Café and Bakery. Quesadillas, burritos, fajitas and other Southwestern fare was offered at Cobrizo's Mexican Grill, and a variety of Asian selections could be purchased at Mein Bowl.

According to **Stacy Haddow**, a GCU graduate who is Thunder Alley's event coordinator, the response from students to the first phase one was great – but the best was yet to come. In mid-November, a state-of-the-art, six-lane bowling alley and game room debuted to more than 400 students who stopped by for an open house with free bowling and food.

The new basement game room, which is connected to the upper level by an open stairway (designed to encourage interaction between floors), includes three pool tables, two ping-pong tables, a Golden Tee golf arcade game, an air hockey table and two lounge areas with big-screen TVs. All game-room activities are free to GCU students, faculty and staff with valid IDs.

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FEATURE



GCU TODAY MAGAZINE

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GCU TODAY MAGAZINE is a quarterly publication of the Office of Communications and Public Affairs at Grand Canyon University.

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→ ROLLING THUNDER



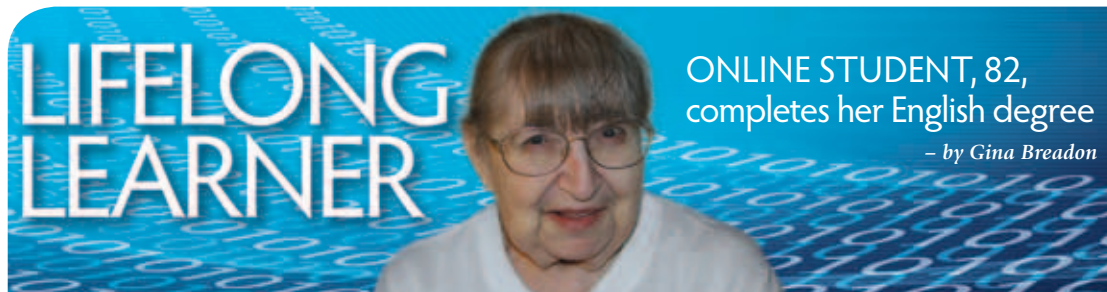
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Daniel Sabillon, who graduated from GCU and worked at the University as a finance counselor, now manages the bowling alley, which is open Sunday through Thursday from 2 to 10 p.m. and Friday through Saturday from 2 p.m. to midnight.

"I knew bowling and games would be great additions to campus, and I've had a lot of fun learning how all the equipment works," Sabillon says. "Because the machines are so sophisticated, a competitive bowler and a beginner can play together and have a great time. We can even program bumpers to pop up only when it's the beginner's turn to bowl."

The word is getting out that Thunder Alley is a terrific place for campus parties and events. Planning is under way for a Super Bowl party, a series of March Madness events, and pool and bowling tournaments.

Sabillon says the most popular ongoing events are "Cosmic Bowling" sessions, which run weekdays from 8 to 10 p.m. and weekends from 9 p.m. to midnight. Unlike most bowling alleys, there is no additional charge. Students with an ID pay only \$1.50 per game, while faculty and staff pay \$2 and guests pay \$2.50. These low everyday rates include shoe rental.



At the age of 92, the legendary **Andy Rooney** completed his last of nearly 2,000 commentaries on "60 Minutes." At 87, **Robert Frost** spoke at **John F. Kennedy's** presidential inauguration.

And at 82, **Dolores Timlin**, a great-grandmother and Minnesota resident, recently completed her long-awaited degree in English literature online with GCU.

Thanks to technology that has evolved rapidly over the second half of her lifetime, Timlin was able to choose a school and find one of few to offer an online English degree. Her choice of a field of study was an extension of her writing experience and love of reading.

The guidance of Enrollment Counselor **Holly Erickson** helped confirm that she was perfectly suited for the program.

Initially, Timlin stayed at home to take care of her family, but eventually she had to find work outside the home after her husband developed a heart condition. Like many young couples seeking to start a new life after World War II, she and her fiancé, who was fresh out of the Navy, chose to marry right away.

"The fact that I left high school early for marriage had left me without a diploma –something that haunted me for many years," Timlin says.

She persuaded the principal to allow her to complete the needed credits.

"For a short time," she says, "I was a senior in high school along with my oldest daughter."

After receiving her associate's degree as a medical secretary at a community college, she was able to continue working for the next 20 years for a group of physicians, establishing a valuable foundation by writing and editing letters and journal articles.

Timlin recalls using a Smith typewriter in high school, with keys that stood two inches above the frame.

"You really had to use the muscles of your fingers to make the keys connect," she says.

Then came a Smith-Corona portable and eventually an IBM Selectric. Later, Xerox typewriter screens revealed one line, then up to a half-page, of text. Over the years, she continued to keep up.

More recently, she maneuvered through GCU's ANGEL program.

"It offers the simplest methods of moving from one place to another on the computer," Timlin says. "The lessons and forums are an easy and comfortable way to give your own opinions and to access those of your classmates. The instructors can offer comments and advice and encourage us to exchange ideas and comments."

In the online classroom, she became known for posts that were insightful, informative and up-to-the-minute.

Timlin also has edited manuscripts for her oldest daughter, who hopes to have a book published. Her youngest daughter, now an assistant professor at Southeast Missouri State University, credits "the little 'h' in her Ph.D." to her mother.

She takes pride in her achievements but mostly in her six children, 15 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren. Her advice to today's college students, of any age, is simple: "Never stop learning. Your brain is the same as any muscle in your body. If you don't use it, you lose it!"

Gina Breadon, a former Phoenix resident who now lives in St. Louis, Mo., is pursuing a degree in English literature at GCU and was an online classmate of Dolores Timlin's.

A SENSE OF DIRECTION

Instructor Michael Kary rediscovers his passion at GCU

– by Anissa Rowe



All of us are performers on the stage of life.

"We've all been given a part to play," says **Michael Kary**, an instructor in the College of Fine Arts and Production, who directed a successful staging of "Dracula" in October and will direct "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in February.

"I learned while in grad school that acting, though a good thing, was not an ultimate thing. I wasn't placed here on this planet to be famous or even to feed my family. I know now that I am placed in each and every situation to show the people around me the character of Christ."

After years of searching to find a niche, Kary's eyes were opened in a way that he hadn't expected.

"(God) told me, 'I've given you these ideas for stories and movies ... and you've done nothing with them,'" he recalls.

That was when COFAP Dean **Claude Pensis** called, wanting Kary and other GCU alumni to participate in a production of "The Pirates of Penzance," which marked the return of the theatre program to campus in the fall of 2010.

Though interested in employment, Kary was told not to count on a job, except perhaps in academic counseling or as an adjunct teacher (for which he applied). **Anna Faith Smith**, assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, knew only that Kary was an alumnus and had a master's degree in fine arts.

"He was completely engaging," Smith says. "He had a contagious energy that caught and held our attention. He was an incredible find."

When Kary heard Smith tell Human Resources to

begin his paperwork as full-time faculty, he was stunned.

"I find I'm not in control of my career – God has a plan for where I'm supposed to be," he says. "Every time (our family) stepped out in faith, God came through and said, 'This is it.' Seeing God come through makes you trust him more."

It all began for Kary with a full scholarship at Southwestern Bible College (now Arizona Christian University), where he pursued the career of a music pastor. The school turned out to be only a detour on his way to finding his true passion.

Kary and Pensis connected, and soon he was starting over with a new major in theatre at GCU – and loving every minute of it.

"I always liked it," Kary says. "I just never thought I was any good at it!"

He met his wife, **Karin**, in GCU's choir, and they were married after dating for three years. After graduating, Kary was given an internship at the University of San Diego, where he learned and performed with the Old Globe Theatre. There were about five shows every year, totaling nearly 20 productions in his time with the theatre.

The Karys spent two years in New York City, where they were blessed with the first of four children.

"It is so hard to have a newborn there, for one reason: strollers and stairs," Kary says.

In 2004, he became seriously ill and experienced an enormous test of faith. He was on the road to recovery, doing small acting jobs, working for an insurance company and serving as a youth pastor, when Pensis called.

"This last year (2010-11) was the best year ever," Kary says, adding that it was filled with teaching, directing and spending quality time with family.

"My family is my highest priority outside of my relationship with God. We work hard at our family, which makes me love it more."

Through his many experiences, Kary has learned to bring his best – and that is what he has brought to GCU.

"He brought back a wealth of knowledge as far as acting goes," Pensis says. "He has shown that as



Photo by Anissa Rowe

a young Christian it is possible to succeed in a largely secular field."

Kary's students are crazy about learning from him.

"His approach to learning a play emphasizes the characters," **Brad Beamon** says. "Instead of saying how he wants it, he allows the actor to do his own style without killing the character."

"He's very fun-loving and he really values people. He'll break tense moments by doing something funny and random. He backs up all of his methods with Bible verses and stories."

Allison Bauer has a favorite Kary saying: "If you don't feel comfortable doing it in real life, don't do it onstage."

For Kary, the faith connection isn't difficult to explain.

"The biggest part of acting is empathy," he says. "Jesus is the ultimate actor in that He could have empathy for us."

Anissa Rowe earned her B.A. in English literature from GCU in 2011. She works in GCU's Accounting Department and is pursuing photography and writing.



Oct. 20: Annual student lip-sync contest

GCU ARENA

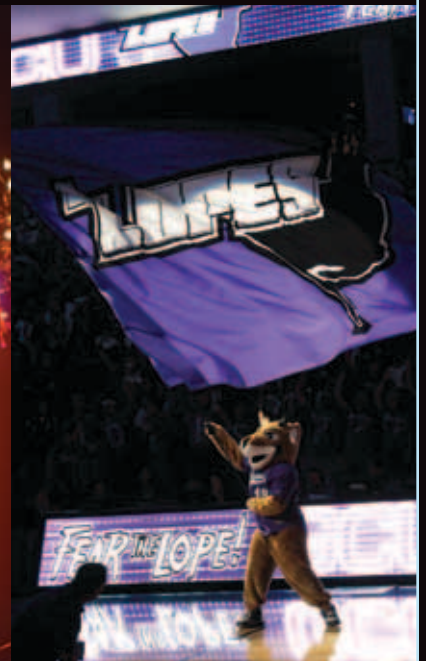
Jewel of Many Facets



Nov. 5: ASU-GCU men's basketball



Oct. 6: David Crowder Band



Thunder gets the crowd fired up



Oct. 21: Switchfoot



Sept. 23 (opening night): Casting Crowns



Nov. 20: Third Day



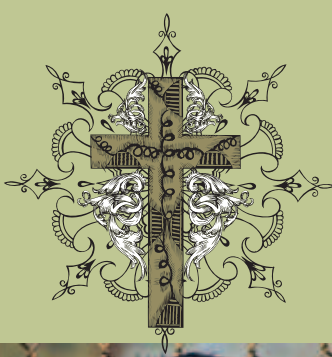
Nov. 17: Lady Antebellum



Dec. 8: 'Handel's Messiah'



Oct. 14: Mixed martial arts M-1 Challenge



NEW DEAN, NEW COLLEGE

Steven Gerali shares his vision for Christian Studies

— by Zane Ewton



Dr. Steven Gerali is an author, speaker, professor, clinical counselor, consultant, mentor and youth minister. He is also the new dean of the College of Christian Studies at GCU.

With an extensive resume, including two doctorates from Oxford Graduate School and a master's degree from Loyola University, Gerali is a noted writer about teen issues. He has published fiction and nonfiction books. He has a unique and varied background that all points back to his first calling in life – youth ministry.

He starts as dean this semester and has plans to make the College of Christian Studies known on campus and beyond.

Q: What attracted you to GCU?

I grew up in a Christian home. When I was in high school, I felt called into ministry and went for it. My first job was in youth ministry and I always stuck with it. I always pushed my education toward youth ministry.

While I was at Willow Creek Community Church, Judson University asked me to help them design a youth ministry undergraduate degree program. From there, I designed the master's degree at Northern Baptist Seminary and the undergraduate degree at Azusa Pacific University.

Sue Myers, a friend of mine who served with me when I was the youth pastor at Trinity Bible Church in Phoenix, recommended I look at this position. I looked, and it feels like a great fit for me and my family, and the college.

Q: What purpose do you see for Christian Studies at GCU?

Christian Studies needs to exist in order to advance the kingdom of Christ and serve Christ's church. I'd like to see the College of Christian Studies offer a full breadth of undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees

in biblical study, youth ministry, military chaplaincy, philosophy and Christian thought, practical theology and more.

As a school of theology, it will be important for us to offer ongoing training for career ministers and church lay leaders. This can be done by sponsoring conferences, lecture series and more to connect students to churches.

Q: What is your vision for the college? What kind of students do you want to send out into the world?

My vision is focused on challenging students to become world changers. I want to send students out into the world who are experts in their field, integrating faith and life into a pragmatic Christian worldview.

I would also like to bring to GCU and develop a world-class faculty to add to our existing faculty. My goal is to see faculty teach in their area of expertise and passion.

Q: Describe your own teaching style.

I expect students to understand they have more than one professor in their class. They have the professor standing in front of them and the people who wrote their textbooks. I don't teach from the textbook. I want to enhance the textbook and present a full view of Christian thought. I am Socratic in my style and avoid teaching single opinion or theological perspective. I want students to think for themselves and develop their own ideas. I probably won't teach much right away, but I plan to teach in the near future.

Q: How do you see the College of Christian Studies fitting in with the whole University?

A College of Christian Studies usually sits as the hub of a Christian university, serving the university by setting the spiritual tone of the institution. This newly formed college will assist in helping students integrate faith and practice into any discipline they study or field they pursue.

Q: How do you think your youth ministry experience can serve you as a college dean?

Well, first off, college ministry falls under the umbrella of youth ministry because traditional college students are still considered late adolescents (ages 18-22). College ministry was always my forte. In addition, effective youth ministry requires the minister to be a constant student of God's Word, adolescence and culture. That means that youth ministry lives in the constant flux of change. I hope

that kind of forward prospective can keep the College of Christian Studies living, changing, relevant and practical.

Q: How do we balance a culture that seems to be moving away from God and still keep a Christian perspective?

We have to understand that Scripture is living and we serve a living Savior. Theology is just as alive as our culture. We get into trouble when we believe we have become culturally relevant if we use the sights and sounds of the day. Cultural relevance means forecasting the shifting values, practices and needs of a society and then introducing a living theology into the societal landscape.

Q: How did you find your purpose?

Finding purpose comes from a relationship with Christ. We are created to be pleasing to God. Jesus teaches us to be kingdom people. As such, we are here temporarily to be a part of the work that God is doing in the world. I realized that I could have gone into any field and the purpose would remain the same. The amazing part of being children of a loving God is that He infuses and uses our passions, skills, talents and abilities to let us live fully into our purpose.

God is doing great things in the world, and He uses us to accomplish them. I've always prayed to be a part of something great that God is doing, and so far it's been an amazing ride. That's what Jesus meant when He said He came to give us life abundantly.

**TELL US
WHAT YOU THINK**

GCU Today Magazine is distributed on campus and mailed to all online students in Arizona. We're interested in your feedback about its content and distribution. What kinds of stories would you like to see? What's the best way to get our publication in your hands? And would you like to contribute? We'd love to hear from you. Direct all comments to **Doug Carroll** at doug.carroll@gcu.edu. **THANKS!**



Marina Nestic (left) and Dr. Julie Nelson

We Are Family

Serbian soccer player Marina Nestic finds support at GCU

– by Jennifer Willis

GCU attracts students, faculty and staff who are leaders, care for others and look for ways to make a difference in the world.

The story of **Marina Nestic** of the GCU women's soccer team illustrates just how well it can turn out.

The Serbian-born Marina came to campus in 2008 as a recruit for the women's soccer team. She was far from home, in an unfamiliar land.

"It was a struggle for me at first," she recalls. "I didn't know anyone, and I didn't know English very well."

Marina was a top recruit, having played for the Serbian national women's team as well as on the Icelandic team FC Keflavik for several summers. The opportunity to get a college education and play soccer at the same time was something she would not have been able to do in her own country.

GCU alumna **Karley Nelson** was a junior on the soccer team when Marina arrived.

"I remember the coaches telling us we were getting a player from Serbia and I didn't know what to expect," Karley says. "I didn't really know where Serbia was, and when she finally showed up, she wasn't anything like I thought she would be."

Marina redshirted her first year and was sidelined by an injury in her second year. Karley, the team's captain, felt a sense of responsibility for Marina and stepped up to make sure she felt welcome.

"I wanted to make sure she felt included," Karley says. "I didn't want her sitting in her room alone. So I would offer to take her to the store or to go and grab ice

cream. After a while, she became like my sister. She is my sister."

Karley invited Marina home with her to Utah for Christmas that first year, and the closeness the girls felt with each other extended to the entire family.

"She just blended in with our family so well," says **Dr. Julie Nelson**, Karley's mother, who is now content chairperson for the College of Doctoral Studies at GCU. "Marina is one of the best people I know, and she fits in so well with my children because of that."

By the end of the Christmas break, Marina had become part of the Nelson family.

"She is my fifth child," Julie says. "She comes to our house for the holidays. She went on a family cruise with us in 2009. Even my parents have adopted her as another grandchild."

Even after Karley graduated in 2009, Julie made the trip down to Phoenix to visit Marina. During those visits, she would put out feelers for job opportunities – and one eventually materialized at GCU.

"I started working in the doctoral college at GCU last July," Julie says. "It's been so cool, because Marina and I can go to lunch together and I get to see her more."

Now all of the children come to Scottsdale for the holidays, and they have started new traditions that include Marina.

"We're a very competitive, athletic family," Julie says. "We always go hiking when the kids come. We play soccer and tennis and make caramel apples. We always have so much fun."

With the Nelsons, Marina has experienced a touch of home.

"In Serbia, families are close," she says. "I haven't seen that so much here in the States. But (the Nelsons) are. They are close to each other in a different way than I am with my own family. They are great people. I was able to go into their house and be there for just a few minutes and feel completely welcome and a part of them. It's very special."

Karley says it's a good fit both ways.

"My mom always says that we love strong women," she says. "And Marina is definitely a strong woman. I look at my time at GCU and I really feel like I was supposed to be there to meet Marina. I think we were supposed to become best friends to open up doors for each other."

Karley and Marina finally got to play soccer together this past summer, in Iceland. And while Marina isn't sure what she will do after she graduates, she would like to stay in the United States, at least for a few more years.

"Women have more rights here than back home, and I love that," she says. "I would love to be able to play for one of the women's professional teams. If that doesn't happen, then maybe I'll get my master's somewhere."

"I think sometimes of how hard it could have been being so far away from my family if things had been different. Karley was always here for me when I needed in the beginning. And now I have 'Mom.' I have a home to go to, and I'm not left alone. It's a great feeling."

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NEVER TOO LATE
82-year-old earns degree online

HIS BEST ROLE YET
Theatre alumnus returns to teach

WELCOME HOME
Family reaches out to Serbian athlete

NOT A GYM, BUT A GEM
New Arena opens with big splash



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ROLLING THUNDER

With bowling lanes open,
there's a new hangout on campus