

GCU TODAY

MAGAZINE

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Volume 2 – Issue 3

LETTING OUR LIGHT SHINE

GCU athletics:
The new No. 1

DNA lab debuts
on campus

Putting unity
in community

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Adam Benavides, in a scene from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" last season, is one of the top performers in the College of Fine Arts and Production.

Let There be (More) Music

College of Fine Arts adds band program this year

– by Doug Carroll

To the long list of things already named Herd at GCU, you can add one that will be Heard.

That would be the new Thundering Heard Pep Band, which could have as many as 80 members under the leadership of **Paul Koch**, the University's director of bands and an instrumental professor of music.

Koch (pronounced "Cook") says his goal is to assemble a high-energy band capable of becoming the "sixth man" at Antelope men's and women's basketball games in GCU Arena.

He says the process is kind of like shopping for a good car stereo.

"I'm more concerned with the balance of instruments than pure numbers," says Koch, who's no stranger to launching a band. Before coming to GCU, he was director of bands at Perry High School in Chandler since the school's opening in 2007.

"The best sound is going to have a good mix of lows, mids and highs. Good-sounding pep bands are more about balance, blend and intonation, mixed with energy and passion."

Koch also has a handle on hoops. For five years ending in 2010, he was creative director of the Phoenix Suns' PHX Percussion. His master's degree is in percussion performance from Arizona State University, and as an undergraduate he was a part of an award-winning drum line at the University of North Texas.

In other words, there shouldn't be a problem feeling the beat in the Arena.

"I can appreciate that I'm at the beginning of something huge and special for GCU fans," Koch says.

The introduction of the instrumental music program is the most significant new development for the College of Fine Arts in 2012-13, a year that will include a reprise of "Handel's Messiah" (Dec. 7 in the Arena with the Phoenix Symphony) and Ethington Theatre performances of Charles Dickens' popular "A Christmas Carol" (starting Nov. 23) and Anton Chekhov's challenging "Cherry Orchard" (Feb. 15).

HERE ARE THE 2012-13 HIGHLIGHTS:

SEPTEMBER

"Much Ado About Nothing," Aug. 31-Sept. 2 & Sept. 7-9, Ethington Theatre

OCTOBER

"Beauty and the Beast" & "Comedy on the Bridge," one-act operas, Oct. 12-14 & 19-21, Ethington Theatre

Masterworks choral concert, Oct. 26, First Southern Baptist Church

NOVEMBER

"A Christmas Carol," Nov. 23-25 & Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Ethington Theatre

DECEMBER

"Handel's Messiah" featuring the Phoenix Symphony, Dec. 7, GCU Arena

Christmas choral concert, Dec. 11, First Southern Baptist Church

Winter dance concert, Dec. 12-13, Ethington Theatre

FEBRUARY

"Cherry Orchard," Feb. 15-17 & 22-24, Ethington Theatre

Opera and Broadway choral concert, Feb. 22, First Southern Baptist Church

APRIL

"H.M.S. Pinafore," April 12-14 & 19-21, Ethington Theatre

Choral Union concert, Faure's "Requiem" and Pärt's "Te Deum," April 23, First Southern Baptist Church

Spring dance concert, April 26-27, Ethington Theatre

MAY

Awards and Commencement choral concert, May 1, First Southern Baptist Church

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

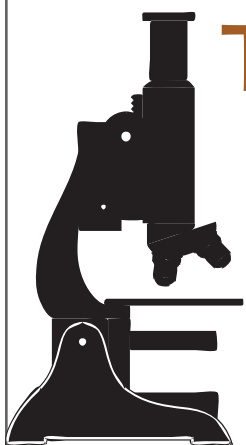
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SWEET SCIENCE

New DNA, forensic chemistry labs open to students this fall

– by Michael Ferraresi

Melissa Beddow (left) and Teresa Bohman say the new DNA lab in the College of Arts and Sciences building has helped draw about 700 students to the forensic science program.



Talk about working under a microscope.

The DNA lab on the fourth floor of GCU's brand-new College of Arts and Sciences building features a giant window separating students from visitors in the hallway – not to micromanage the novice DNA analysts, but rather to shine a spotlight on the detail-oriented work

being conducted in one of five new laboratories on campus.

Few students will be trained enough to test bodily fluids and conduct DNA comparisons by this fall. But that's simply because the forensics program is less than two years old. With nearly 400 new forensic science students beginning prerequisite courses, the labs should see heavy use as the forensics program continues to evolve.

In addition to the DNA lab, the 73,000 square-foot Arts and Sciences building includes two general chemistry labs, an organic chemistry lab and a forensic chemistry lab. Forensic science students will be joined by others in nursing, biology pre-med and other programs that require lab work.

Melissa Beddow, the assistant professor who leads GCU's forensic science program, said students will use

the same tools in the new Arts and Sciences building as they'll encounter in most professional DNA labs. The idea is to distinguish GCU from other universities, by giving more hands-on opportunity to undergraduates and better equip them for the workforce.

"They're actually going to be able to add to a resume that they've worked with those instruments," Beddow said. "It's set up like a real DNA lab, just like you'd see at any crime lab."

"The hardest part about getting a job in forensic science is the initial job. It's very competitive. Personally, it took me one year of applying to a bunch of different labs before I got a job."

The DNA lab is a major improvement from the 1970s facilities at the Tell Science building, where forensic students worked on fingerprinting, taking plaster casts of footprints and other basic CSI-like techniques in semesters past.

GCU's first forensic science graduates are scheduled to earn their diplomas this fall. Last semester, there were around 300 students enrolled in the program, but the popularity of crime scene and DNA analyses shot enrollment numbers to around 700 total for the fall.

Lab coordinator **Teresa Bohman** said the new Arts and Sciences labs will include special airflow features to maintain sanitation. As many as 24 students will fit into a single classroom lab, she said, although for some courses as few as 12 would be optimal. It will all depend on enrollment figures.

Many students will be working with samples of blood, saliva and semen ordered from a company in St. Louis. The samples are used by forensic program students to develop DNA readings from samples that simulate crime-scene evidence collection.

Bohman, whose background is in DNA sequencing, said she's pleased with the opportunity GCU students will have to do what many undergraduates miss at larger universities.

"Students at a lot of big universities have the ability to join a big research lab, but they're cleaning glassware or doing the stuff the grad students don't want to do," said Bohman, who is organizing other lab coordinators to ensure efficient workflow in the new labs from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

The focus at GCU is on preparing students for work at labs or in municipal police crime labs. In order to land those jobs, they must be able to demonstrate how to use the instruments used by the pros.

Bohman said the hands-on mentality is essential, and the forensics program requires that students pass their foundational chemistry coursework before working in the DNA lab.

"By the time you get to DNA class, you're not randomly putting substances into an instrument – you understand what's happening at the molecular level," she said.



Photo by Darryl Webb

NO. 1 IN DIVISION II

GCU's ascension
as top athletic
program was
fast, furious

– by Bob Romantic



R.C. LaHaye can barely remember the losses.

There were a lot of them, and they came by such scores as 59-0, 53-3 and 55-0.

But that was five years ago, which in athletic years at GCU is like a lifetime.

Consider the following: In 2007-08, LaHaye's wrestling program was 0-24-1 in its inaugural season, and followed that up with a 1-16-1 record the following year.

In those two years, the Antelopes' athletic program ranked 146th and 173rd, respectively, among NCAA Division II schools in the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings – a measure of across-the-board success in athletics.

								
<p>Mychala Lynch (center) was an NCAA champ in the 100-yard butterfly.</p>	<p>GCU's women's golf team brought home plenty of hardware from the NCAA Championships.</p>	<p>Victor Carazo (right) lost only one match all season en route to an NCAA title at 174 pounds.</p>	<p>Kyle McCrite won an NCAA title at 125 pounds and tied a school record with 38 wins in 2011-12.</p>					
			<h2>HOW FAR WE'VE COME</h2> <p>GCU's rankings in the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings since 2009</p> <table><tr><td>2012 – 1st</td><td rowspan="4"></td></tr><tr><td>2011 – 8th</td></tr><tr><td>2010 – 76th</td></tr><tr><td>2009 – 173rd</td></tr></table>	2012 – 1 st		2011 – 8 th	2010 – 76 th	2009 – 173 rd
2012 – 1 st								
2011 – 8 th								
2010 – 76 th								
2009 – 173 rd								
<p>The GCU men's team won a national title in the indoor track and field season.</p>	<p>GCU's women's basketball team was 24-4 and won the Pacific West Conference for the fifth time in six years.</p>	<p>Braylon Pickrell reacts after hitting the last-second, game-winning 3-pointer that beat Dixie State and sent GCU to the NCAA Division II tournament.</p>						

Fast forward to 2011-12.

The GCU wrestling team crowned two individual champions at the Division II national tournament and finished third as a team.

And the school, with a national championship from its men's indoor track and field team and top-10 finishes from seven other teams, won the Learfield Cup as the top Division II athletic program in the country.

"Five years seems like such a long time ago, but it really wasn't," LaHaye said. "Looking back at where we were and where we are now, it's been an incredible journey."

How exactly did GCU get that good in athletics, that fast? Let's count the ways.

Commitment from the top

You can't talk about GCU's rise in athletic prominence without pointing toward President and CEO **Brian Mueller**.

Mueller, a former basketball coach, is passionate about athletics. He understands what a successful sports program can do to raise the profile of an institution.

When he arrived at Grand Canyon in 2008 and inquired about the level of commitment for athletics, he learned that most programs offered only two or three scholarships, had only one coach and had little support for things such as athletic training and facilities. In fact, the emphasis for athletics was more about boosting enrollment numbers and keeping the ground campus viable during a difficult transition period than it was about winning championships.

That changed quickly.

"Brian's comment at the time was, 'If we're going to do something, we're going to do it well,'" said GCU's director of athletics, **Keith Baker**. "He said, 'We're going to raise the expectations, but we're also going to provide the resources for you to succeed.' ... That's really what changed the face of what we do athletically."

Today, all 21 NCAA programs at GCU operate with the maximum number of scholarships available in Division II, have paid assistant coaches, and are supported by a full athletic training staff led by **Geordie Hackett** and a strength and conditioning staff led by **Chuck Howard**.

"Brian has given us everything we need to be successful, and we haven't looked back," said **Petar Draksin**, head coach for men's soccer.

For Mueller, it's a commitment that goes beyond athletics.

"We want excellence in academics, performance and faith. Music, theatre, dance and athletics are in the category of performance," Mueller said. "They're a way to communicate to the public who we are, and a way to build excitement about what we're doing."

First-rate facilities

GCU Arena, which opened in the fall of 2011, is the crown jewel of the University's \$313 million facelift. The Arena gives the Antelope basketball teams a state-of-the-art facility, provides a powerful recruiting tool and enables the University to host concerts, conventions and graduation ceremonies.

But the addition of the Student Recreation Center – and the Performance Athletic Center inside – also has had a big impact.

Within the Rec Center are practice courts for basketball, a wrestling room, locker rooms and a first-class weight room.

"Adding a Performance Athletic Center, and having Chuck Howard and his staff ... there's that mentality that we're going to invest this resource in making you, as an athlete, better prepared from a physical standpoint," Baker said. "I think that was a huge piece – and a much-overlooked piece – of how we got to where we are today."

International athletes

Scholarship opportunities and first-rate facilities also

have opened more doors for GCU coaches to recruit international athletes.

Soccer, an international sport, has long had a foreign flavor at GCU. But swimming, tennis and golf teams in particular have added Division-I caliber athletes from abroad in recent years.

"We can bring in (international students) who are hoping to use this as a vehicle to a better life, to escape poverty or a bad home or sometimes civil strife," said **Stevie Gill**, head coach for women's soccer, who is Canadian. "My attitude is to go and get the best kids; I don't care if we're Division 15. ... As long as they're a good kid, a good player and they're here for the right reasons, I don't care where they're from."

It helps that eligibility requirements for international athletes are not as strict in Division II as they are in Division I. And many of those athletes are not as concerned about the distinction between the two.

"It's always a challenge to get Division I kids to a D-II school," said **Steve Schaffer**, men's and women's swimming coach. "But as we become more successful, kids can see that they will get good coaching at this level, will compete at a high level and they'll get an opportunity to compete in NCAA championships – which they may never see at a D-I school."

The next step for GCU is to show that the shiny new Learfield Cup trophy – which had been won for eight successive years by Grand Valley State University (Mich.) – is not a one-year wonder. Beyond that, the University hopes to make the jump to Division I athletics in the near future.

"Athletics are part of building the brand of the institution," Mueller said. "Step 1 was to become very good at the Division II level by giving scholarships, building facilities and hiring the right coaches. That has put us in position to take the next step, to compete at the Division I level. If we can participate and win at that level, it will bring even greater value to a (GCU) degree."



Photo by Darryl Webb

HEAD OF THE CLASS

Nursing program making best marks in Arizona

— by Bob Romantic

Shanna Cunningham (right) and Carolyn Wilder are the president and vice president of GCU's Student Nurses Association.

Shanna Cunningham gets affirmation almost daily on her decision to attend GCU and start a second career as a nurse.

Sometimes it comes from the classes she takes or the faculty members she comes in contact with. Sometimes it's in the Scriptures that are scattered about the College of Nursing building. Sometimes it's in her dealings with health-care professionals at local hospitals.

And sometimes it even comes when she's working part time as a waitress at Babbo's Italian Eatery in north Phoenix.

"When I'm just talking to customers and I tell them where I go to school, they're like, 'Ooh and aah, that's a good school. You're not going to have any problem getting a job,'" said Cunningham, 42, a mother of four who previously worked as a manager in a law firm. "And people in the medical field, they know and respect GCU for putting out good nurses."

The statistics bear out Cunningham's experiences.

In 2011, GCU nursing graduates achieved a 95.79 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examinations (NCLEX), which are required in order to be licensed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. That was the best showing among bachelor's degree programs in the state — better than the University of Arizona (95.59 percent), Arizona State University (90.09) and Northern Arizona University (88.69 percent). It also far exceeded the nationwide pass rate of 87.9 percent.

In the first quarter of 2012, that number rose even higher for GCU, to 98.51 percent (again, highest among four-year schools in the state). In other words, 67 nursing graduates took the NCLEX in the first quarter, and only one did not pass.

Those are extraordinary numbers, even for a school that has long prided itself on its nursing program.

"The score just shows how robust our bachelor's of nursing degree program is and the great pride we take in the success of our students," said **Dr. Anne McNamara**, dean of the College of Nursing. "With the addition of our state-of-the-art simulation training lab and partnerships with highly respected health systems, GCU nursing graduates are among the best-prepared and sought-after job candidates."

In addition to the main campus, GCU's nursing program has satellite campuses at Scottsdale Healthcare, AT Still University in Mesa and St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix, and others in Albuquerque, N.M., and Tucson.

In all of them, two things stand out:

- A strong faculty-student relationship borne through a private education setting in a smaller environment.
- A Christian worldview perspective that is prevalent throughout the program.

"I think that's what makes us different, I really do," said **Dr. Cheryl Roat**, associate dean for the College of Nursing. "We have a great-quality program and fairly small classes. But the Christian environment, that's why some students choose to come to Grand Canyon. We don't try to indoctrinate students necessarily, but we integrate spirituality into every course that we teach so that they can provide relevant, pertinent spiritual care to their patients."

Carolyn Wilder, a 44-year-old mother of five, is one such student.

"Tome, nursing goes hand in hand with Christianity and caring for others before yourself. I really

liked that about the school," said Wilder, who could have attended any state school with a presidential scholarship. "We are able to respond to patients on a spiritual level as well as an emotional and physical level.

"There's something about the personal nature of the program that helps students feel like they can succeed. And having that spiritual guidance ... whether you believe in God or not, just having people around you who are willing to help means a lot."



Graduates of the GCU nursing program had a 95.79 percent pass rate on the NCLEX test in 2011 — the best showing among four-year universities in Arizona.



Photo by Darryl Webb

GETTING TOUGH ON BULLYING

Dean of theology brings expertise to troubling societal issue

– by Bob Romantic

Dr. Steven Gerali shared his expertise on the issue of bullying in radio interviews that aired on nearly 600 stations and reached roughly 2.5 million listeners this summer.

Like many people, GCU's dean of theology, **Dr. Steven Gerali**, was shocked and appalled when a video of junior high students bullying a 68-year-old woman on a school bus in Greece, N.Y., surfaced on the Internet this summer.

The students maliciously taunted and degraded school bus monitor **Karen Klein** with a stream of insults, profanities and threats. At one point, they demanded to know her address so they could steal from her and deface her property. One boy, ridiculing Klein about her weight, said that if he stabbed her with a knife, hamburgers would slide out of her stomach.

And, in what may have been the most stinging remark, one of the boys said, "You don't have a family because they all killed themselves because they didn't want to be near you."

Klein's son committed suicide about 10 years ago.

"It was an overt display of unfiltered, unrestrained, boundary-less kids," said Gerali, who has been sought out in radio interviews during recent months as an expert on the subject of bullying. The interviews were aired on nearly 600 stations and reached roughly 2.5 million listeners.

"There is a lot we can learn from an incident like that," Gerali added. "What I hope is that parents

and people who work with kids become very aware that online social networks are unfiltered and they allow kids to practice some things that can translate to real time."

Gerali, who came to GCU in January of 2012 as dean of what was then the College of Christian Studies, has published several books, including "The Struggle" (2001), "How to Stay Christian in High School" (2004), "Teenage Guys: Exploring Issues that Teenage Guys Face and the Strategies to Help Them" (2006) and what he called his pride and joy: "The Crest: Book 1 in the Mentor Chronicles" (2011).

In 2009-10, he also published a series of six books geared toward parents and youth workers titled "What Do I Do When Teenagers ..." Each hits on a critical issue facing teens, including bullying. That book delves into gender differences in bullying, warning signs, prevention strategies and how to help disordered teens, among other things.

Bullying has been around forever but reached new heights after the shooting at Columbine (Colo.) High School in 1999 in which two students who had complained of being bullied lashed out, killing 12 students and one teacher while injuring 21 others before committing suicide.

"A lot of times these kids feel backed into a corner and they feel terrorized and they really are threatened to the point of death," Gerali said.

"They really think they are going to die, so the only way out is to come out fighting or to take their lives, or both.

"That's what started a lot of this. I started digging in and researching it, and it became more apparent that bullying was reaching new heights and taking on new forms."

Bullying, Gerali said, is more than the pushing, shoving, name-calling, steal-your-lunch-money kinds of things that many people have endured. "We're now talking about kids who terrorize other kids."

And the Internet has opened up even greater opportunities for bullying, allowing kids to question someone's sexuality or make accusations on social media outlets that live in cyberspace forever.

"For a teenager who is just developing an identity, things like that are just deadly," Gerali said.

"My passion has always been for kids who are hurting or feel marginalized. I really believe that people who work in Christian ministry with kids need to stand as advocates for them. God's Word says that He gives us our ministry of reconciliation. If we don't bring reconciliation into the lives of these kids, their families and our society, then nobody is going to do it."

A VIEW OF WHAT'S NEW

The summer of 2012 was the busiest ever for construction projects on campus, and these were the major changes. There's more to be done next summer, too.

1 North Gym renovation

- Conversion of original gym to four lecture halls, each with capacity of 100

2 College of Arts and Sciences building

- Four-story building housing College of Arts and Sciences and College of Theology
- Six science labs (including DNA lab), simulation and skills labs, 19 classrooms, three lecture halls, chapel, offices

3 Camelback Road parking garage

- Five stories, 1,600-plus parking stalls
- For commuter students, faculty, staff, guests

4 Student Union dining renovation

- Seating capacity doubled, to 600-plus
- "360 Grill" for burgers, chicken, stir fry, breakfast items
- Beverage station with 100-plus flavors
- Yogurt and dessert station, salad and deli bar

5 Camelback and Sedona residence halls

- Newest of five residence halls on campus
- 628 beds for Camelback, 660 for Sedona
- Camelback also houses offices for Security, ROTC, IT Support and Student Disability Services

6 Main entrance (33rd Avenue) renovation

- New guard station, wider turnaround area, wider sidewalks, improved lighting

7 Colter offices

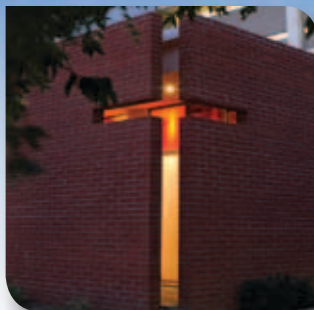
- Renovated apartment complex is new home to Human Resources, Facilities and Marketing departments
- Includes three buildings, two warehouses and parking area

8 COMING IN 2013

- Chaparral and Saguaro residence halls
- Parking garage for northeast campus



AT GCU



ON THE COVER: This open-air cross, designed into the brickwork on the southeastern corner of the Chapel, is a distinguishing feature of the new CAS building and showcases an iconic symbol visible from the Promenade.



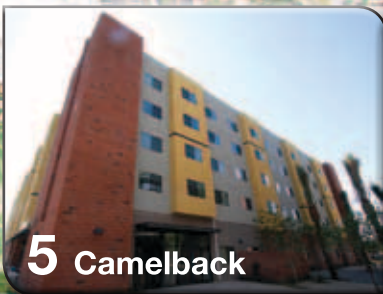
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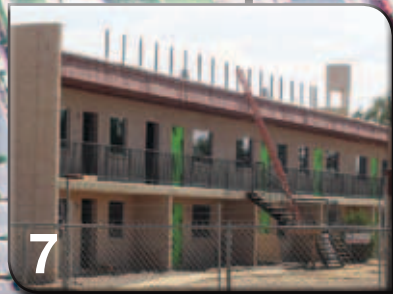
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5 Sedona



5 Camelback



7



6



With her degree from GCU, LaTwan Gibbs wants to help others avoid making the mistakes that she did.

Photo by Colleen Doggett/Center (Texas) Light & Champion



A LIFE REDEEMED

Online student from Texas credits GCU's care and concern

— by Doug Carroll

Forger, thief, prostitute, drug addict and now ... GCU online student.

"God can do anything," says **LaTwan Gibbs**, who is on track against all odds to graduate in 2014 with a bachelor's degree in counseling that would make her the first in her family to graduate from college.

A conversation with Gibbs, 40, who lives in the town of Center, Texas, less than 20 miles from the Louisiana border, provides ample material for a book or made-for-TV movie.

Three stints in the state penitentiary and dozens of trips to jail. At least six tries at drug rehab. In short, a series of serious problems.

"I was a beast," she says, and the unsavory details of a 13-year stretch of her life do little to dispel the notion. "There's nothing I didn't do."

The trouble began in August of 1995, when she witnessed the fatal shooting of her husband, a drug dealer. That began a swift downward spiral, which saw her habit reach \$3,000 a day and her actions do anything to support it. She says she was run over twice and had guns pulled on her, acknowledging that she "should have been dead a long time ago."

On Nov. 4, 2008, finally sick of it all, she turned herself in on forgery and theft charges — and turned to God for help. She had tried everything else.

During a prayerful night behind bars, she says, "I told Him, 'Do what you will with me, so that I can be in control of my life again.'" After serving 60 days, she was out and ready to start over, with friends and family offering support.

They backed it up with a scholarship fund to help her continue her education. She inquired with GCU, and Enrollment Counselor **Lenard McKenzie** took it from there.

"He cared," Gibbs says. "He listened to everything I said, and I felt like 'Wow, I'm not a number.' If not for him, I would have gone somewhere else and I wouldn't have been so enthusiastic about (my education). Because of him, I'm still at GCU."

McKenzie says that at the start, Gibbs barely knew how to use a computer. During her first year of study, they talked almost every day.

"There were some barriers, and I walked her through them," he says. "She's doing great now, and I'm encouraging her to finish."

Gibbs credits others at the University as well, including Academic Counselors **Sabrina Henderson** and **Erica Lizarraga**, Financial Counselor **Amber Timmons** and Instructor **Brian Raftery**. When Gibbs lost her father to cancer last year, she says Henderson's concern helped her pull through.

"These people have cared about me and they didn't know me," Gibbs says. "They have called me and wanted to know how I was doing. I am determined to meet each and every one of them. GCU has so many wonderful people."

Active in her church and caring for children during the day, she says her goal is to be a social worker and drug counselor, helping others steer clear of the trouble that had a grip on her.

"I want the education," she says. "I need the knowledge to go with the experience. All I want to do now is give back. God was with me. I know my purpose now, and it's to stop others from going as far as I did."

"I'm not 'better than,' I was just delivered. God made a way for me."



GCU students Natalie Kobinski (from left), Rachel Abney and Tina Norton walk along with Assistant Professor Anne Wendt (foreground) through a cemetery in Guatemala.



Dirt-floor shacks and a lack of electricity or running water are prevalent at remote villages in Guatemala.



Hundreds of people rummage through garbage at a dump in Guatemala.

A MISSION TO HEAL

Guatemala trip one of several by GCU students in 2012

– by Bob Romantic

There were times when they almost felt like prisoners.

Other times when they were horrified at the sights of a cemetery and garbage dump (which sometimes were one and the same).

And others when they felt frustrated by the level of care they could provide to some patients.

But, more than anything, GCU nursing students who took a mission trip to Guatemala this summer said they felt blessed they were able to help so many people with little to no access to health care, and thankful for the opportunity to experience a different culture.

"I got way more out of it than any of the patients we helped could have possibly," said **Tina Norton**, one of three graduate students who made the trip. "They have such a different way of life; it makes me very appreciative of what I have living in America."

Norton's experience is echoed by dozens of GCU students every year. This year, more than 100 participants took mission trips to locations such as India, Thailand, Rwanda, Malawi, China, Costa Rica, Fiji, Peru and Mexico.

GCU students got a wake-up call when they arrived in Guatemala City. Their living quarters was a three-story building that was surrounded by barbed wire. The living conditions were fine – there was electricity, air mattresses, even the Internet – but they were not allowed to leave the compound under any circumstances, and group trips to outlying villages were taken in vans with tinted windows so that they didn't advertise Americans were on board.

"It has really become a lawless society over there, so you pretty much hire your own law," said **Anne Wendt**, an assistant professor, who coordinated the trip. "The houses up and down our street had armed guards because we were in a fairly nice neighborhood. Even the Sparkletts bottled water truck had armed guards."

Grad student **Rachel Abney** said the security measures were a little unnerving, but what was even more startling was a trip to a cemetery and the dump on the first day.

The cemetery consisted of concrete caskets piled in rows seven or eight high above the ground.

"And if the family stops paying the rent on the casket, they'll chisel out the corpse and throw it in the dump and then rent it out to the next family," Wendt said. "That was a very moving experience for the students. Here they were standing over this dump, and on the ground they saw little bone fragments (from a child) and vultures circling around picking things clean."

Hundreds of people live at the dump in tents, scavenging for things they can live on or items they can cash in for recycling.

"It was really sad," Abney said. "They would all run after the dump trucks when they came in because they wanted to be the first one to go through the stuff that was being dumped."

Exposing students to such atrocities on the first day is common on mission trips. It breaks them down and opens their eyes, exposing the world of good they can do – even in a short amount of time.

For GCU's nurses, the "good" came in the form of day trips to remote villages in Guatemala with no running water or electricity.

There they encountered people with parasitic and fungal infections, birth defects, stomach pains from contaminated water, and skin abrasions and rashes.

Those were the easy treatments.

They also encountered others: a pregnant woman who hadn't felt her baby move in two weeks and probably already had suffered fetal demise; another woman who had a blood clot in her leg; and a man who was paralyzed and had developed bedsores from his wheelchair that were so bad they went straight to the bone.

"It was pretty frustrating at first trying to figure out what we can do to help these people," said Norton, knowing that treatments used in the U.S. simply aren't available at such remote outposts. "There were some people where we couldn't do as much as what should have been done, which is against my upbringing as a nurse. You don't want to leave anybody behind like that. But in that situation, you kind of have to."

In the end, the number of people they were able to help, and the gratitude of those people, stayed with the students.

"These people would offer you the food they were eating or drinking, and they had nothing for themselves. They were very gracious," said grad student **Natalie Kobinski**.

"I would definitely do something like that again."



PUTTING THE UNITY IN COMMUNITY

'One Spirit, One Purpose' theme resonates in west Phoenix

– by Michael Ferraresi

Helping refugees learn English. Making sure struggling parents have Christmas gifts for their children. Spending time with aging military veterans, reminding them they are never forgotten.

Community service is part of the fabric of GCU. For years, University students and staff have partnered with west Phoenix neighborhood leaders on the streets around campus. That dedication will be amplified this fall with more students on campus than ever before, and the results could be limitless.

A theme being introduced this fall is "Community: One Spirit, One Purpose." The idea is based on the second book of Philippians, which encourages selflessness and caring for others. Dean of Students **Pastor Tim Griffin** said the theme is meant to focus students on staying humble amid the accelerated growth of GCU's campus – that as the University sheds its image as a quiet little Christian college, it's perhaps even more important to give back.

The larger and more successful GCU becomes, the more resources will become available for programs to help at-risk people who share west Phoenix with the University's students. Neighborhoods west of Interstate 17 within several miles of the campus have long fought the stigma of being run-down and hopeless. But others, such as Griffin, see west Phoenix as an area in transition.

"To me, I don't think it's something we should shy away from," said Griffin, who oversees the Campus and Spiritual Life offices at GCU.

"People who have a ministry heart, that are bent that way – that are bent on looking at the world as a place to contribute, to invest, to make a difference – they don't see it like that," Griffin said. "They see it as an opportunity."

Expanding Serve the City

Earlier this year, nearly 300 students turned out for GCU's traditional Serve the City event, helping to paint walls and clear yard debris at the Dream Center Christian recovery home. Serve the City also has aided a monastery, churches and low-income housing complexes where families rebuild their lives.

Griffin and other campus spiritual life leaders believe Serve the City outreaches could be spaced out with more precision over several weekends in a semester, rather than sending out hundreds of students on a single Saturday.

The Dream Center, located south of GCU's campus on Grand Avenue, is an old Embassy Suites motel that has been converted into housing for people looking to escape the dead-end lifestyles of drugs, prostitution and street violence. Residents surrender to the Lord and submit to a structured rehab process to reclaim their independence.

"I felt the presence of God with the people I worked with over there," said **Kasper Axtell**, 23, a recent GCU graduate who volunteered at the Dream Center. "Just the pure hell they've been through. It's amazing to see what God can do for someone who's just been so broken."

Other GCU students have volunteered at the Dream Center by helping with media projects and criminal justice research, playing to their academic strengths.

"If you allow GCU to just be a paradise where you don't know what's going on outside its walls, you'll miss out on learning about what people have gone through who haven't had that security," Axtell said.

Changing children's lives

Georgia Sepic, who owns the Serrano Village apartments east of GCU on Camelback Road, said students from the next-door University have changed the lives of many of the children who live in the modest complex.

Serrano houses refugee families from more than 20 countries and helps them find basic social services. GCU students have pitched in on everything from educational programs to ice cream socials to minister to residents, many of whom have fled war-ravaged native countries.

"The refugee students see this and they see they might be able to achieve the same thing through Grand Canyon University," Sepic said.

And they have. This fall, a few of Serrano's own – including some from Myanmar and Liberia – will begin or continue their college studies at GCU.

It's one of the many reminders that GCU's neighborhood is reciprocal, and that the impact is lasting, if not permanent.



A group visit to military veterans has become a Memorial Day tradition for GCU's Military Division.



GCU's Fall Festival brings the community to campus every October for food, fun and games.



Canyon Cares Christmas in GCU Arena provided presents for more than 700 neighborhood children in 2011.

COMMUNITY: ONE SPIRIT, ONE PURPOSE



Students pitched in with paint rollers at the Dream Center recovery home (also pictured on opposite page) for Serve the City last spring.

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

GCU spearheads community service programs that help neighborhood children, support Christian non-profits and enhance the quality of life in west Phoenix. Programs include:

SERVE THE CITY

Hundreds of students cleared debris, painted blighted walls and scrubbed floors at sites known for their service of poverty-stricken families. Increased student interest could expand the event across several weekends; the next major event is scheduled for Oct. 6.

FALL FESTIVAL

Families received hundreds of donated books, and GCU hosted a carnival-like costume party with games and food for nearly 6,000 visitors in October. Scheduled for Oct. 26.

SOCCER CLINICS

Like the United Nations of youth soccer, the camps created lasting bonds between international refugee children and others from west Phoenix.

RUN TO FIGHT CHILDREN'S CANCER

GCU hosted 5K and 10K races in March, adding more than \$70,000 in fundraising to combat childhood cancer. Races return to campus March 9.

CANYON CARES CHRISTMAS

Last December, more than 700 neighborhood children from low-income families received donated presents.

MEMORIAL DAY

For the past two years, GCU's Military Division staff met with residents of Arizona State Veteran Home in Phoenix, helping to brighten their day at the assisted-living facility.



MAKING HIS 'CITY' SAFE

Mikel Longman returns
to Arizona as top cop for
community colleges

— by Doug Carroll

Mikel Longman says his degree in public safety administration was essential to landing his position with Maricopa Community Colleges.

Imagine being police chief of a city of 275,000. Pretty big job, right?

Now imagine that those people aren't all in one place. In fact, they're scattered in nearly a dozen locations over 9,000 square miles. But you're still responsible for their safety.

The scenario describes what **Mikel Longman** does every day. As chief of police and director of public safety for the Maricopa Community Colleges in metropolitan Phoenix, he oversees 10 campuses populated by 265,000 students and more than 10,000 employees.

Longman, 58, a graduate of GCU with a bachelor's degree in public safety administration, has been on the job since January of 2012. Although he served for 34 years in a variety of police positions in Arizona, it was a two-year stint as police chief for the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, Colo., that best prepared him for his current post.

"Collegiate policing is a unique discipline," says Longman, a Tempe native who couldn't pass up a chance to move home with his wife and be closer to their seven grandchildren.

"With this, a community policing orientation is your bread and butter, and a college or university is a community unto itself. You have to look at it as a small, compact city."

In Colorado, Longman supervised 15 police staff and 15 civilian employees on a campus of 15,000. He says he could walk the entire campus "in a couple of hours."

The numbers and geography of the Maricopa system don't allow anything like that. He has 44 officers and more than 400 unarmed public safety aides, and the system extends out to Paradise Valley, South Mountain, Chandler-Gilbert and Estrella Mountain.

Longman and his recently hired deputy, **David Denlinger** — another GCU alumnus — try to visit each campus at least once a week. That can put 150 miles a day on a car.

Standardization and centralization of police and public safety functions was what the Maricopa system hired Longman to do, and he has been busy converting each campus unit into a "precinct" with its own commanding officer. Previously, each campus unit operated mostly on its own. Soon a headquarters facility will be built in Tempe.

"Our chancellor has championed a 'One Maricopa' concept," Longman says.

While serving as a lieutenant for the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Longman says he saw value in pursuing his degree with GCU, even though he didn't know at the time where his career would lead.

As it turned out, that degree opened doors. He couldn't have landed the Colorado and Maricopa positions without it. And an earlier stint as chief of the Criminal Investigations Division for DPS would have been closed to him, also.

"When I look back over my career, each job has prepared me for the next one," says Longman, who began in 1976 on the Navajo Reservation and also has supervised an undercover narcotics squad and worked as a paramedic on a rescue helicopter.

Longman says campus police officers have learned over the years to embrace community-oriented policing and to always remain vigilant.

"Behavioral intervention" teams meeting regularly to identify potential problems have been key in some places. In Colorado, that kind of collaboration helped Longman identify a troubled graduate student who eventually was suspended, expelled and taken into custody after a confrontation.

"We could have made the news, and not in a good way," he says of the situation. "It takes vigilance, and that's what you lose sleep over. You have to be prepared for the unimaginable."

"You can't effectively deliver public safety services without establishing cooperative partnerships within your community."



Photo by Darryl Webb

MOVES ON

Time-management skills acquired as a GCU student-athlete have paid off for Samantha Murphy in her postgraduate studies.

A WINNER

With basketball over, Samantha Murphy embraces another challenge

– by Doug Carroll

Samantha Murphy is still putting up big numbers and making it look easy, although she insists the newest phase of her life is anything but that.

A 97 score on a recent exam in her postgraduate studies to become a physician assistant compares favorably with the high marks she posted in the classroom and on the basketball court at GCU.

But Murphy says beating a Dixie State double team was never this challenging.

"This is the hardest schooling I've ever had," says Murphy, 23, who began at Midwestern University in June. "It's like medical school condensed into two years."

GCU's career leading scorer for women's basketball (2,147 points in four years) played professionally in Iceland in 2011-12 before returning home to begin at Midwestern. She's living on the Glendale campus and finding most of her waking hours consumed by books, taking difficult classes in anatomy and biochemistry.

If all goes according to plan, she will graduate in

2014 with a master's degree in physician assistant studies and take her boards shortly thereafter.

"I feel more and more confident I made the right choice (for a career)," says Murphy, who was an Academic All-American at GCU. "The work is hard and daunting, but it's a part of the process. I'm pretty confident I'll enjoy this as a career."

Her break with basketball may have been made easier by playing for a losing team in Iceland. Although she was the team's leading scorer and enjoyed the experience of living overseas for six months, she felt it was time to be done.

"It wasn't that we lost," she says, "it was that people were OK with it. The culture is so different. Americans are where we are in basketball because we're so competitive. You lose your passion for the game playing with people who aren't (that way).

"I wish I could play basketball forever the way it was in college."

The Antelopes went 29-3 in 2010-11, advancing to the NCAA Division II Sweet 16 before losing to Cal Poly Pomona. Murphy, a 5-foot-8 guard, averaged

24.6 points and was named Division II Player of the Year, leaving an indelible mark as a student-athlete. In her four years, the GCU women went 83-33.

She says the lessons she learned from the University weren't all in the classroom.

"Because I played a sport, I've become an expert on time management," she says, "and I can easily focus. That's just as valuable as the education itself, and it's probably the most important takeaway for me from GCU.

"Athletes know how to commit to something, and I think that's why they do well (at other things)."

It's possible that the Antelope women's basketball program will see another Murphy soon. Samantha's younger sister, **Vanessa**, is a freshman this fall at St. Mary's High School in Phoenix – and she's already 5-foot-11.

"She's got work ethic in her genes," Samantha says. "She'll be a different player than I was.

"I love coaching her and helping her. I had my time and enjoyed it and made the most of it."

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NEW ON CAMPUS
CAS building has DNA lab

LEARFIELD CUP
How the 'Lopes got it done

LaTWAN GIBBS
An online student's story

ALUMNI SUCCESSES
Mikel Longman, Samantha Murphy

GCUTODAY

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A VIEW OF
WHAT'S NEW
AT GCU