

GCU TODAY

MAGAZINE

MAY 2013

Volume 3 – Issue 2

HERE COMES THE SUN

Dan Majerle takes
coaching reins

GCU has impact
on counseling

Rock & Worship
movie in making

Veterans ease
into student life



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

New library	P3
Dan Majerle	P4-7
Counseling program	P8-9
Rock & Worship	P10-11
Year's Top 10	P12-13
Military Division	P14-16
Servant Scholars	P17
Class of 2013	P18-23

GCUTODAY MAGAZINE

Volume 3 – Issue 2

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

Written and Edited by

DOUG CARROLL
Communications Director
602.639.8011
doug.carroll@gcu.edu

MICHAEL FERRARESI
Senior Writer
602.639.7030
michael.ferraresi@gcu.edu

BOB ROMANTIC
Senior Writer
602.639.7611
bob.romantic@gcu.edu

COOPER NELSON
Junior Writer
602.639.7511
cooper.nelson@gcu.edu

Design by

DEANNA FUSCO
SoHo Southwest

Cover Photography by

DARRYL WEBB
University Staff Photographer
602.639.6375
darryl.webb@gcu.edu

Office of Communications and Public Affairs

BILL JENKINS
Vice President

Grand Canyon University
3300 W. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85017



GOING for the RECORD

New Life Singers enter studio to make worship CD

– by Cooper Nelson

Gabe Salazar has trouble counting the number of times fans requested a CD of his New Life Singers traveling vocal ensemble.

People wanted copies everywhere they sang, and Salazar was forced to turn them away. He decided it was time to give them the recording they wanted.

"(A CD) is the No. 1 request everywhere we go, but we didn't have anything to give them," said Salazar, a Grand Canyon University alumnus who became campus worship director in 2011. "We have wanted to make one for a while, and now we finally have the talent."

The New Life Singers began recording tracks for their debut album on April 1. Salazar said the CD could be released by August. The album features contemporary worship covers and student-written songs, reflecting the group's roots as GCU's worship band.

Songs will be recorded at the Church for the Nations music studio in Phoenix. Salazar said the group will include professional musicians from around the country to record instrumentals before the New Life Singers record vocals and solos.

CDs will be sold on campus and on tour. Digital recordings also could be available on iTunes. Salazar said the hope is to sell 5,000 copies, the minimum to land a spot on the Top 100 of Billboard magazine's Christian charts. But he emphasized the importance of honoring God.

"Yeah, it would be really cool to sell 5,000, but the goal is not to sell records," Salazar said. "The heart and soul of the group is worship. We want to share our hearts with people so they can enjoy (the CD) and God's Word."

Salazar, 28, grew the New Life Singers from five vocalists to a premier university choral group of 16 vocalists and five musicians. The group tours the Southwest, performing nearly 100 times a year while leading church worship and serving as ambassadors for GCU at high schools.



Gabe Salazar, GCU's campus worship director, says the New Life Singers consistently receive requests for recorded versions of their songs. Photo by Darryl Webb

A main focus of the group is outreach and evangelism. The group regularly performs at homeless shelters and for charitable organizations such as the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Student members often share their testimonies after performances.

Junior vocalist **Jonelle Robson**, a member for three years, said the CD expresses the group's collective faith while encouraging others to believe.

"We want to use this CD to share our faith and our hearts with everyone ... to encourage people in their faith and daily lives," Robson said.

"There is a piece of us in this album that people can take with them and know who we are," said **Christopher James**, another junior vocalist.

The singing group has become popular over the last year and positions are in high demand, so Salazar said competition for future spots will be fierce and expectations will be raised. Along with the current CD and rigorous touring schedule, he has an ambitious future in mind for the group.

"It is such a new group, and to set the foundation (by recording the album) is important," Salazar said.

"This won't be the last CD." ■



The New Life Singers performed four songs during the annual Opera and Broadway Concert by GCU's Music Department in February at First Southern Baptist Church. Photo by Darryl Webb

LIBRARY with a VIEW

Ambience, capacity get major boost with move to Student Union

— by Bob Romantic

Renderings courtesy of Architects & Planners International

As a Grand Canyon University commuter student, **Daniel Harned** often finds his way to Fleming Library to work on his homework.

"I like it here because it's quiet and I can concentrate better," said Harned, a sophomore from Chandler. "But in the afternoon, it gets really packed in here."

The good news for Harned: The library is about to double in size as it moves from its current building near the entrance to GCU to the third and fourth floors of the new Student Union expansion.

The bad news: The new library, with its arena-like architecture, glass facade and location at the heart of campus, is sure to attract many more students with the same idea as Harned.

"We're very excited about the location," said **Nita Mailander**, director of library services at GCU. "Hopefully the library will be seen as a gathering space for students and faculty."

The four-story, 58,000-square-foot addition to the Student Union is the latest in a \$300 million renovation and expansion project at the University. Two more residence halls and a second swimming pool also will be completed before the 2013-14 school year, when enrollment is expected to increase to 8,500.

"It's going to be very cool," **Butch Glispie**, owner of Pono Construction, said of the Union expansion. "There will be a lot of glass, a lot of block. There

will be some spectacular views from both inside and out."

The four-story expansion will be built on the north side of the existing dining hall.

The first floor will be an extension of the current Student Union dining area and is targeted for completion by Aug. 15. Remaining floors probably will be completed in subsequent months.

The second floor will include a large Starbucks coffee shop, seating area and balcony.

Floor plans for the library were still being designed in early April, but Mailander said the third floor probably would include more dynamic spaces featuring computer stations and places for group study, while the fourth floor would offer spaces for individual quiet study.

Combined, that will be 24,000 square feet of library space.

Fleming Library has just 8,000 square feet on the first floor, plus office space on the second floor. It can seat about 100 people, including 37 computer stations.

"This building is wonderful and it's historic," Mailander said of Fleming, "but it's just not enough space. As the campus grows, we really need the extra seating."

During the first quarter of 2012, an average of 5,797 people per month used the library. That jumped to 8,131 per month in the first quarter of 2013.



With even more new students next year and a more modern, open space to call home, Mailander said the number of library users "is going to go through the roof."

Marissa Bibian, a sophomore from Los Angeles, will be one of them.

"The new building is just awesome. I'll use it a lot more," Bibian said. "There's more room and the windows with all the natural light, it will be much more inviting. The glass walls will make it seem like you can see all of GCU." ■

BIG DAN



ON CAMPUS

New coach's heart is for Phoenix – and now GCU, too

– by Bob Romantic



Photo by Darryl Webb

It was only a preseason conditioning test, and it wasn't designed for one of the bigger basketball players on the team to excel.

But for **Dan Majerle** – then a 6-foot-6, 230-pound post player at Central Michigan University – it didn't matter.

During a one-mile run at the school's track, as the story goes, one of Majerle's teammates broke away from the pack of runners.

"It was a guy who had run cross country in high school who was much smaller and had a body conducive to running longer distances," said **Chip Pisano**, a teammate of Majerle's at Central Michigan. "There were four of us running together, and all of a sudden Dan takes off and starts running after him. Dan ended up running a 4:35 mile. For somebody that big, in the mid-'80s, that's a really good time. Our milers on the track team were running 4:20.

"We just looked at each other and said, 'How is he doing this?' But that tells you how competitive Dan is. He never wants to lose at anything."

As Majerle remembers the event of some 30 years ago, his time was even better – a 4:26. Regardless, it exemplifies the determination and work ethic that never wavered throughout his professional career.

Not when he became the second-leading scorer in Central Michigan history.

Not when he attended the U.S. Olympic tryouts, where

they didn't even know how to pronounce his name initially (for the record, it's "Mar-lee"), and earned a bronze medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Not when he was booed by Phoenix Suns fans who had never heard of him after he was drafted with the 14th overall selection in the first round of the 1988 NBA draft.

Not during a 14-year NBA career in which he was a three-time All-Star, a two-time member of the All-Defensive Team and an inductee into the Suns' Ring of Honor.

Not as an assistant coach with the Suns.

And not now, as he becomes a head basketball coach for the first time, at Grand Canyon University.

"I've been successful at everything I've done so far. Everything I put my mind to, I go 100 percent," Majerle said during a break in his second week on the job. "I have no doubt that I can be a good coach and I will be a good coach."

Icon in the community

It's that type of attitude that defined Majerle's career, endearing him to the coaches he played for, the players he shared the court with, and the fans who came to watch him play.

His rugged "Thunder Dan" style of play early in his career won over even casual basketball fans;

he was an integral part of the **Charles Barkley**-led Suns team that captured Phoenix's heart as it made its way to the 1993 NBA Finals; and the Majerle's Sports Grill in downtown Phoenix became so popular that there are now four in the metro area (with a fifth planned in Flagstaff).

His good looks don't hurt, making him a favorite of female fans everywhere. But, more than that, Majerle's massive popularity is a result of a humility and regular-guy persona that come across in his dealings with people.

"He's always willing to give back and he treats people as equals," Pisano said. "He's the type of guy who will talk to anybody. That's just the way he is and how he grew up. If you sat down and had lunch with him, he's just a normal guy. ... That is why I think he continues to be such a loved figure in this town."

To Pisano's point, consider this: Of all the athletes who have called Phoenix home over the last 25 years, who is the most iconic in the community?

Steve Nash, **Randy Johnson** and **Barkley** certainly accomplished great things in their careers, but none was entrenched in Phoenix.

Kurt Warner did wonderful things in the community and on the field, but he played here for just five years.



« **Shane Doan?** Hockey just doesn't resonate with the masses.

Luis Gonzalez has to be on the short list because of his game-winning hit in the 2001 World Series, good-guy image and love affair with the community (although it must be pointed out that his restaurant venture was short-lived).

And the late **Pat Tillman** certainly qualifies for the sacrifices he made.

But Majerle belongs in the conversation as someone who has been front and center as an enormously popular player, coach and businessman in metro Phoenix for 25 years. Although he played for two other teams professionally, this was always his home.

"He's iconic. He's a legend in this community," said

Jerry Colangelo, the former owner of the Suns and Diamondbacks who now serves as a special assistant to GCU President/CEO **Brian Mueller** in the University's transition to NCAA Division I athletics. "He established himself as one of most popular players ever to wear a Suns uniform. You get the whole package with Dan Majerle."

A.J. Sulka, a longtime friend who runs Majerle's restaurants, said he is admittedly biased on this topic, "but the thing that always separated Dan from those guys, for me, was Dan was so accessible and involved in the community."

"I've never seen him turn down one autograph or picture," Sulka added. "I've seen a lot of celebrities or athletes come into the restaurant and a lot of them don't want to be bothered. But Dan is

unique. He's got that personality that is sincere and genuine.

"But all this iconic stuff, that's just the cherry on top. The benefit of hiring Dan is all the other stuff, the hard work, the loyalty. He's all Grand Canyon now. And once he's in, he's in."

Diving in with the 'Lopes

In the end, no matter how well-known or well-liked Majerle is, he will be judged on his ability as a basketball coach.

To that end, he hit the ground running in his first few weeks on the job as he began interviews for his coaching staff, talked to current players, started the recruiting process of new players and made the rounds with seemingly every media outlet. »

Timeline DAN MAJERLE Through the Years

New Grand Canyon University basketball coach Dan Majerle enjoyed an All-Star career as one of the most popular players in Phoenix Suns history. His "Thunder Dan" nickname originated from his rugged play and thunderous dunks early in his career, and he later changed his game to become more of a perimeter shooter and defensive specialist during the Suns' playoff runs in the early 1990s. Here are some highlights of his life, including a 14-year NBA career as a player.



Photo by NBA/Getty

Born Daniel Lewis Majerle in Traverse City, Mich.

Sept. 9, 1965

Was a two-time Class A all-state selection at Traverse City High School, where he averaged 37.5 points and 16 rebounds per game as a senior.

Early 1980s



Photo by Barry Gossage/Phoenix Suns

Played college ball at Central Michigan University, where he averaged more than 20 points in three of his four seasons and was an All-Mid-American Conference selection in each of those years. Averaged 23.7 points and 10.8 rebounds as a senior and finished his college career ranked second all-time at CMU in scoring (2,055), steals (171) and field-goal percentage (.536).

Mid-1980s

Scored a career-high 37 points against Charlotte Hornets.

Nov. 29, 1991

Summer, 1988

Played for the U.S. Olympic team that won a bronze medal in Seoul, South Korea.



Photo by Barry Gossage/Phoenix Suns

June 28, 1988

Chosen by the Phoenix Suns with the 14th overall pick in the NBA draft, which the Suns acquired (along with Kevin Johnson, Mark West and Tyrone Corbin) in a trade from the Cleveland Cavaliers for Larry Nance. When Majerle's name was announced, Suns fans booed the selection. That led Suns coach Cotton Fitzsimmons to chastise Suns fans, telling them they would never boo Majerle again.

Feb. 12, 1995

Started for Western Conference in NBA All-Star Game played in Phoenix. As the Suns' sixth man, he became the first reserve in NBA history to be voted an All-Star starter. He was also named to the All-Star team in '92 and '93.

"Since he's been here, I've been very impressed by his work ethic and attention to detail and the way he has thrown himself into this environment," said **Keith Baker**, GCU's director of athletics. "He's been very intent on doing things the right way and working with our compliance people."

The work ethic, Majerle said, is a testament to his parents and the way he was raised.

His father, **Frank**, was a single-chair barber who awoke at 5 a.m. every day and worked until 6 or 7 at night standing and cutting hair. His mom, **Sallie**, was a part-time secretary and full-time chauffeur for three boys who played football, basketball, baseball and hockey.

"I remember following my dad around everywhere. He'd play softball or in a YMCA basketball league,

and me and my brothers would be batboys or watch him play and always be around some kind of activities," Majerle said.

Sallie wasn't an athlete, but Majerle said "she used to do bounce passes to me in the kitchen."

Which means they were allowed to throw the ball in the house?

"Oh yeah, she knew better. She had three boys," Majerle said. "We didn't have a lot of money or anything, but they did everything they could to manage three boys and make sure we had whatever they could give us. ... I saw them working as hard as they can to make it work for us and I grew up not knowing any different. That's how you're supposed to get it done."

Majerle is confident that work ethic and competitive drive and the success he had in the NBA will translate to success as GCU enters into Division I athletics beginning in 2013-14.

"You look around the nation today, there are a lot of mid-majors that are great colleges," Majerle said. "I think this is a university that can be a Gonzaga or a Butler or a team like that. That's why I'm stepping in and why I think we can do it. ... It may take a little time, but we'll take some steps in the right direction and we'll get there."

Judging by how fast Majerle ran that mile, GCU may get there sooner than you think. ■

Opened Majerle's Sports Grill in downtown Phoenix. Today, there are four Majerle's restaurants across the Valley.

December, 1992

Member of Suns team that won Western Conference championship before falling to Chicago Bulls in NBA Finals.

1992-93

Was a member of Dream Team II, the U.S. basketball squad that won gold at the World Championship of Basketball in Ontario, Canada.

Summer, 1994

Hit nine 3-pointers vs. Minnesota Timberwolves.

Jan. 11, 2000



Photo by Chris Covatta/NBA

Signed as a free agent with the Suns.

July 19, 2001

Sank his Suns franchise-record 800th and final career 3-pointer with 25 seconds remaining in the season finale vs. Dallas. He retired as a player following the game and ranks sixth in league history with 1,360 3-pointers made. He also holds the NBA Finals record with 17 3-pointers made in a series against Chicago in 1993.

April 17, 2002

Began first of four seasons as an analyst on Suns television broadcasts. Also worked for TNT during the 2003 NBA playoffs.

October, 2002

Oct. 7, 1995

Traded along with Antonio Lang and a conditional first-round draft pick to the Cleveland Cavaliers for John "Hot Rod" Williams.

Aug. 22, 1996

Signed as a free agent with the Miami Heat.

March 9, 2003

Inducted into the Suns' Ring of Honor. At the ceremony, Suns Chairman Jerry Colangelo announced the creation of the Dan Majerle Hustle Award, explaining, "When you think of Dan Majerle, you think of a guy who gave maximum effort in every game, every practice, in everything he did. It is this work ethic that inspired the creation of the award." It is given annually to a Suns player exemplifying those attributes.

Nov. 1, 2006

Inducted into the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame.

2008-2013

Served as an assistant coach for the Suns.

Jan. 21, 2013

Left Suns after being bypassed for head coaching position when Alvin Gentry was fired.

March 18, 2013

Hired as Grand Canyon University's men's basketball coach.



Photo by Barry Gossage/Phoenix Suns



Photos by Darryl Webb

TAMING the INNER DEMONS

Dr. Kirk Bowden, GCU emerge as leaders
in addiction counseling education

— by Michael Ferraresi



As director of GCU's professional counseling and addiction studies program, Dr. Kirk Bowden has helped the University comply with national standards, enabling students to secure state certifications after they graduate. Photo by Darryl Webb

As many Grand Canyon University employees wrap their workdays to head home, **Kara Thomas** drives to a central Phoenix drug- and alcohol-rehabilitation facility.

Thomas serves GCU during the day as a University enrollment representative for the College of Nursing and Health Care Professions. But on some weeknights until 10 p.m., she works at Calvary Addiction Recovery Center as part of a master's-level practicum toward her dual degree in addiction counseling and professional counseling.

Thomas, 39, is among nearly 3,000 GCU students earning bachelor's and master's degrees in counseling. Addiction counseling curricula at both

levels provide students with the training necessary to treat those grappling with their inner demons, and to serve those clients responsibly.

The faith-based Calvary Center is one of dozens of Phoenix-area treatment centers where GCU master's students complete their practicum. As part of her 20-hour-a-week internship, Thomas leads intensive group therapy sessions, helps chart treatment plans, assists with drug-testing and earns the experience that licensing boards require for certification.

Faculty who updated GCU's courses last year said changes in curriculum emphasized ethics and addressed meeting the requirements for professional licensure. The influx of substance abuse

and behavioral disorder counseling jobs spiked around 2010 and is expected to grow over the next several years by 27 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Thomas, who volunteers with foster-care teens in her free time, said even counselors or therapists who might not specialize in addiction counseling need to have a fundamental understanding of addiction in dealing with most clients. Bad habits are linked to trauma and repressed emotion.

"The need for an understanding of that is so great," Thomas said. "It's really important for counselors to understand that, even if they don't work in it (full time)."

Like other GCU students who are drawn to addiction counseling as a career, Thomas was inspired to tackle chemical dependency issues based on personal experiences. She saw some family members consumed by addictions and decided to become part of a solution.

Alcoholism and drug addiction are just two behavioral problems addressed by counselors. Sex addictions, eating disorders and adolescent video-game habits are among the counseling niches available to future counselors, although licensing standards vary for counselors who go beyond substance-abuse issues.

GCU's program helped Thomas better understand the psychology of addiction and how to communicate with clients in a therapeutic setting. The clients in her Calvary group therapy sessions include mostly alcoholism cases, although cases of heroin and prescription-drug addiction also are common. As some clients grow frustrated, they can lash out with angry words toward counselors.

Now she can tell the difference between authentic rage and an unconscious reaction based on cognitive distortion and unhealthy defense mechanisms.

"In the past, I might have been offended," Thomas said. "Now I don't get offended at all. I understand them better."

Program began as partnership

GCU launched its addiction counseling program in 2006 through a partnership with Rio Salado Community College in Phoenix. The move linked Rio associate's degree students into a four-year university to continue their education for professional certification.

At the time, **Dr. Kirk Bowden** chaired Rio Salado's chemical-dependency program. He became director of GCU's professional counseling and addiction studies program after founding the initial partnership program. Courses he originally wrote in 2006 have been rewritten multiple times over the past two years, he said, to keep pace with trends in licensing.

Bowden is involved with addiction counseling standards and training on so many levels that his LinkedIn page reads more like a story than a resume. The former stockbroker serves as chair of the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners, as president-elect of the National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors, and on the ethics committee for the American Counseling Association, in addition to dozens of other professional affiliations.

Bowden suggested the culture of metro areas such as Phoenix has partly led to the higher demand for counselors. Metro Phoenix is known as a place where many residents resettle from other parts of the U.S. Bowden believes too often people with no



GCU counseling graduate student Kara Thomas (left) speaks with therapist Valerie Fink-Sierra in a room at Calvary Addiction Recovery Center, where Thomas leads intensive group therapy as part of her master's practicum. Photo by Darryl Webb

close friends or family turn to substances first, or fail to understand the nature of their habits, rather than seeking meaningful emotional support.

"(More) people in the old days had a pastor or rabbi ... someone to share their issues with," Bowden said. "Now people don't have that same kind of thing. When they have issues, they don't have close friends they've grown up with. They don't have a pastor they've gone to at the same congregation for 10 years that they feel comfortable with."

Bowden said he felt drawn toward his psychology graduate studies later in life because he wanted to learn "how people thought, why they did the things they did."

With increased demand for trained counselors in both public and private sectors, he said it was critical for GCU to continue to update its curriculum. He oversees the master's program, which now enables students in 40 states to complete their practicum work in their hometowns as they earn degrees online.

Launching pad for careers

Ellen Roy-Day oversees GCU's counseling bachelor's program. She helped Bowden write some of the earliest coursework for GCU and gutted the curriculum as part of the recent overhaul to comply with national guidelines.

The bachelor's program coursework "may qualify graduates to meet the standards for state, national and international certification/licensure for professional prevention specialists and treatment counselors/providers," according to a program overview. But many undergraduates transition

immediately into the 36-credit-hour addiction counseling master's program to earn the chance to practice independently, Roy-Day said.

Roy-Day also worked in finance before launching her career of more than 20 years as a counselor in both clinical and private-practice settings. Now, she teaches everything from an introductory campus course to an online counseling theories course at GCU.

She said the new curriculum only generally mirrors the old program, which would have left students struggling to meet requirements for licensing in some states. Bachelor's students can get licenses in some states as an associate substance-abuse counselor, although they are limited to jobs in education, and as well as to hospital behavioral-health tech jobs, until they earn a master's.

"We wanted to update (the curriculum) and make it a little more cutting-edge, have it include a lot of new theories," said Roy-Day, who specializes in treatment of psychological trauma for emergency first-responders and military personnel.

Even with an addiction counseling master's, students can only really focus on treating substance abuse. GCU's professional counseling degree program helps students build toward certification as licensed professional counselors, to work on everything from couples therapy to post-traumatic stress disorder and gambling addictions.

As GCU counseling faculty understand, the scope and need for thoughtful professional counselors is so great that students have plenty of options for career development. ■



THE ROCK & WORSHIP PICTURE SHOW

– by Doug Carroll

Concert tour's documentary
to premiere at GCU in fall

A few years ago, the members of **MercyMe** had a killer idea.

The Texas-based Christian rock band realized that the free Gospel message so foundational to its music was being offered to the public at a premium ticket price.

That didn't make sense, and neither did what followed: MercyMe decided it would put together an arena-size tour of Christian acts, hit the road and charge a mere 10 bucks admission. No reserved seats. No ticket fees. **Bart Millard**, MercyMe's lead singer, thought it was high time in a low economy for a tour where the fans won.

The band's accountants thought it was a killer idea, too – it would kill the bottom line – and weren't in favor.



The Rock & Worship Roadshow, sponsored by GCU, played to large crowds in 20 cities earlier this year. Lead singer Bart Millard (lower left) of MercyMe says his band "couldn't avoid the fact that God was calling us" to orchestrate the tour. Photos by Eric Brown/ericbrownphoto.com

"MercyMe's advisers told them not to do it," says **Ryan Slaughter**, who worked for the band and is now producing a documentary film about what became the Rock & Worship Roadshow, which is still beating the odds after five years.

"This tour, on paper, is a terrible business decision," Slaughter says. "But people step out in faith and just do it."

Indeed they do. Earlier this year, the Roadshow and its nine acts played 20 cities in little more than a month, starting out in Madison, Wis., and finishing in Fresno, Calif. Grand Canyon University and Compassion International were the major sponsors that helped make it possible.

GCU's partnership with the tour is three years old. And if a stop in Ontario, Calif., in February is any indication, the relationship is thriving.



Producers (from left) Ryan Slaughter, Ryan Smith and Brody Harper are making a documentary film about the Roadshow.



Kevin McNeese of New Release Tuesday, a Christian music website, has followed the tour and says it has "the biggest heart."



Singer-songwriter Tim Timmons, who is battling cancer, says the Roadshow feels like "being church" to the performers.

The University's 5½-minute video, narrated by Millard, came up on a giant video screen at sold-out Citizens Business Bank Arena about a third of the way through the four-hour concert. Within seconds of its conclusion, enrollment representatives from GCU, stationed prominently at one large booth on the arena's floor and another on its concourse, were swamped with inquiries by concertgoers ranging from high schoolers to working adults.

The tour has presented an ideal opportunity for GCU to talk to students and families in search of an affordable, private Christian education.

"One of the keys in marketing is repetition, and this was our third year," says **Scott Fehrenbacher**, the University's senior vice president for faith-based marketing. "Our brand and our story are connecting."

Slaughter's documentary, scheduled to premiere in the fall on the GCU campus, will supply an inside look at how the Roadshow entourage of 110 people comes together, telling the stories of those out front and behind the scenes. The University's role will be featured prominently.

"Normally, a tour is named something and it's over," says Slaughter, 33, of Dallas. "This is an annual thing where the artists change but the tour doesn't. People end up liking this tour, and we're trying to get the 'why' out of them.

"The public has the wrong perception of what actually happens on a tour. A lot of decisions are made. Money is spent and lost. There are little stories that would be eye-opening to people."

Such as the story of **Tim Timmons**, 37, a singer-songwriter from southern California, who was the first act onstage every night. He was diagnosed with an incurable form of cancer 12 years ago.

The gung-ho involvement of Timmons, who leaves his wife and four young children at home to go on tour, is one of the mysteries Slaughter's film will try to solve.

"My orders from Jesus are very specific," Timmons says. "I'm supposed to influence the church, moving believers to followers through my story. There's a true family feel (to this tour). I have four kids and an amazing wife, and I love them so much, but every time I come home I end up missing people from the tour.

"I feel like we are the church together. Instead of doing church, we're *being church*."

He says he wants the film to be authentic and transparent.

"I hope it shows a bunch of people figuring out how to follow Jesus," he says, "the normalness and the struggles of who we are. And also the diversity in the kingdom of God."

The tour's underdog status in the music industry also is something that the film will bring out, Slaughter says.

"It's the challenge of making ends meet while doing what God has called you to do," he says. "Some days I think these people are stupid and crazy. But (the tour) always ends on a good note – maybe MercyMe only made five bucks – and that's all you remember. Hopefully, we have a story in that."

Kevin McNeese, 34, co-founder of the Christian music website New Release Tuesday, says there's no show quite like the Roadshow.

"This tour has the biggest heart," McNeese says. "The people are ministry-focused, and that starts at the top. It's different, and you don't find that a lot."

A \$10 ticket is countercultural, to be sure. But the Gospel is as countercultural as it gets.

"People thought we were nuts trying to do this five years ago," Millard says, "and we knew they were right. But we couldn't avoid the fact that God was calling us to do it.

"If we could do it for free, we would." ■

2013 ROCK & WORSHIP ROADSHOW

Tim Timmons	Adam Cappa
Rhett Walker Band	Jeremy Camp
Luminate	Tedashii
Family Force 5	MercyMe
Kutless	

3 YEAR IN REVIEW 2012-13



OUR TOP 10 STORIES

From academics to athletics to the arts

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

GCU DIVISION I WAC
WESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE



1 We're going Division I

On Nov. 27, it became official: GCU has been invited to join the Western Athletic Conference and NCAA Division I. The move involves a four-year probationary period, during which Antelope teams won't be eligible for postseason play. The WAC will have nine member institutions in 2013-14.

2 New coach: 'Thunder Dan'

On March 18, former Phoenix Suns star Dan Majerle was named as the new head coach for men's basketball. Majerle, 47, played 14 seasons in the NBA and was introduced at a GCU Arena rally. "Lopes up, baby!" he said, demonstrating that he had done his homework on the favorite hand signal on campus.

3 Expansion plans

The University announced in early 2013 that it is interested in building a satellite location in metro Phoenix, probably in an East Valley city. Other cities in the Southwest – including Las Vegas, Albuquerque and Tucson – also have demonstrated serious interest in bringing GCU closer to them.

4 Run to Fight Children's Cancer

The third running of GCU's most high-profile community event, on March 9, brought a record number of runners and walkers to campus for 5K and 10K races, raising more than \$100,000 for Children's Cancer Network and Phoenix Children's Hospital. The race's founder, Bill Jenkins, and its director, Jose Moreno, make it happen.

5 College of Arts and Sciences building opens

The building, home to GCU's Arts and Sciences and Theology colleges, opened in the fall of 2012 and is now the signature academic building on campus. A DNA lab on the fourth floor serves the University's growing forensic science program. The campus Prayer Chapel also is part of the building, on the ground level.



<p>6 Student Union renovation</p>	<p>7 Banner year for Nursing</p>	<p>8 Best rock concert: Lecrae</p>	<p>9 'Handel's Messiah' at Arena</p>	<p>10 Campus enrollment increase</p>
<p>Mongolian stir fry? In a campus dining hall? Yes, if we're talking about GCU's Student Union, which underwent extensive renovation in the summer of 2012 and reopened to rave reviews. A four-story addition is in the works. Also new in 2012-13: Thunderground, a music venue on the lower level of Thunder Alley.</p>	<p>It's now the College of Nursing and Health Care Professions. Its dean, Dr. Anne McNamara, won the prestigious Athena Award from the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. Its students are passing the National Council Licensure Examinations at higher rates than Arizona's three state universities. And it opened a new facility in Albuquerque.</p>	<p>The popular rapper and his Unashamed Tour stopped at GCU Arena on Nov. 2 for a supercharged show that won't soon be forgotten. The University's faith-based marketing staff, headed by Scott Fehrenbacher, has built solid relationships in Christian music, resulting in several top acts coming to campus.</p>	<p>With the Phoenix Symphony's music director, Michael Christie, conducting, the holiday favorite returned to the Arena on Dec. 7 and benefited from a more intimate configuration. This concert, along with the annual Christmas choral concert and a superb Ethington Theatre production of "A Christmas Carol," made the season extra bright.</p>	<p>Enrollment at the Phoenix campus hit 6,500 for 2012-13 – an increase of more than 3,000 over the previous year. Projections are for as many as 15,000 students by 2015. The University's ability to hold the line on tuition, with no increase in four years, and its generous scholarship program have contributed mightily to the growth.</p>

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED★★★★★

University's Military Division makes it
personal with veterans

— by Michael Ferraresi



Donterry Colombel (shown with GCU military billing specialist Jessica Christenson) served more than 11 years in the Marines before moving to Phoenix to study criminal justice at GCU's ground campus. Photo by Darryl Webb

★ Top Right: Colombel, now 30, served in Iraq as a team leader for an incident-response platoon. Photo courtesy of Donterry Colombel



The interior of GCU's new campus Veterans Center includes military antiques that make the space feel more comfortable for vets and their families. Photos by Darryl Webb



After Iraq, **Donterry Colombel** told himself he would never spend another day in a desert.

Then, after his medical retirement from the Marines, Colombel realized the best way to build his post-military career required moving to unfamiliar Arizona. He joined thousands of other veterans and active-duty military personnel currently studying at Grand Canyon University.

The Louisiana native served in the U.S. Marine Corps for more than 11 years, including as a team leader of an incident-response platoon during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Colombel provided security for high-valued personnel, trained Marines in everything from hand-to-hand combat to base defense, and served for most of his adult life since his parents supported his decision to enlist at 17.

Colombel, now 30, retired two years ago as a staff sergeant. He was used to taking and giving orders and dealing with high-stress combat situations. Returning home to the comforts and old ways of his bayou hometown of Larose, La., provided more culture shock than a two-year assignment to Okinawa, Japan.

Colombel planned to earn a bachelor's degree, setting out with GCU online at first, but was leery about heading back to campus. Although he held the rank of staff sergeant and the billet of police chief for the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Colombel now volunteers as a crime scene and weapons instructor with the campus Law Enforcement Club.

GCU's burgeoning Military Division and the calming culture of the private, Christian university also helped ease him into life as a student.

"It's that transition phase that's most difficult," said Colombel, who aims to complete his bachelor's in criminal justice and work toward teaching collegiate law enforcement-related courses.

"You feel alone," he said. "You feel there is no one to relate to, or to back you."

The shift out of active duty can be stressful beyond what many stateside Americans are accustomed to. With so many U.S. military personnel seeking to take advantage of educational benefits to offset tuition and build new careers, GCU developed a Military Division staff exclusively dedicated to serving veterans. Dozens of counselors in the Military Division are also veterans, ranging from Vietnam vets to active-duty National Guard.

Earlier this year, GCU opened a campus Veterans Center staffed daily with counselors familiar with navigating military educational benefits. The space is reserved for veterans and their families, giving them an alternative place to study or relax in between classes.

Colombel described GCU classrooms as comfortable, with multiple veterans in some of his recent classes. Many of the young people he shares assignments with are the same age as many of the Marines he trained in a more rigorous military classroom setting.

"It's a little more interactive," Colombel said of his new learning format. "(GCU faculty) go far out to lend tutoring to those who need it. It's more helpful than I'm used to. It's less formal.

"The focus of this school is academic," he added. "You can see that as soon as you step on deck."

'Above and beyond'

Over the past four years, GCU has grown its Military Division to include nearly 150 employees, mostly enrollment counselors who serve as the primary liaison between the University and student veterans.

Brett Mitnick, who is one of nine Military Division enrollment managers, said his team takes pride in providing precise assistance to veterans studying online.

"You're potentially speaking to them over in Okinawa or Afghanistan, or you're dealing with the spouses of people who are called to service all over the world," Mitnick said. "For soldiers returning from duty, who are now transitioning into civilian life ... it's a great feel-good for my counselors to help someone like that."

Military Division staff estimated that around 10 percent of military students attending GCU are active duty. But **Bart Burkert**, the executive vice president who oversees the division, would like to enroll more active-duty military and help them maintain their degrees.

The bottom line is assisting veterans and making their University experience more fulfilling.

Tyler Davis, 25, a Marine veteran who lives in the suburbs north of Chicago, enrolled online at GCU after his mother – a fellow GCU online student – suggested he make the switch from community college. His brother and fellow Marine, **Kyle Davis**, joined their mother in seeking a degree in secondary education.

GCU military enrollment counselor **Bill McNally** helped Tyler Davis on the path toward earning a business degree. Davis said he was pleased with how McNally helped him make sense of his education options over the phone, making him feel as if he were sitting face-to-face with an adviser.

"Bill definitely goes above and beyond his job," Tyler Davis said. "I've never seen Bill, I don't know what he looks like. But when I call and say, 'It's Tyler,' he already knows who I am."

Refuge for reflection

Colombel sat outside the Veterans Center patio overlooking the campus pool. There was nothing like it in the Marines, he said.



« He could study in between breaks in his classes in the peace of the private room, or lounge and watch music videos or movies from new leather furniture, often surrounded by other veterans who've taken a similar path to GCU. The Veterans Center is their refuge.

"There's so many of us here, we're happy to help them out, get them straight, help them get to where they need to go. We look out for each other," Colombel said.

The Veterans Center often provides retired Navy hospital corpsman **Tim Walker** with a calm, quiet break between classes. The 29-year-old southern California native moved to Phoenix to take psychology classes on campus to earn his bachelor's degree by December.

Walker planned to graduate quickly to move on to master's studies so he can eventually work with other veterans who, like him, suffer from the flashbacks and nightmares related to post-traumatic stress disorder. After eight years as a medic attached to the First Marine Division and a Marine air-wing unit, Walker has four tours worth of memories from high-intensity combat situations in both Iraq and Afghanistan.



★ Tim Walker, 29, served as a Navy corpsman medic over four tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He said GCU's campus culture is relaxed and helps him focus on his psychology studies as he copes with post-traumatic stress disorder. Photo by Darryl Webb

Focusing on studies can be difficult on some days with the activity and crowds on campus, so the Veterans Center is a place Walker can find a little extra solitude, where he doesn't need to explain his history or condition so much.

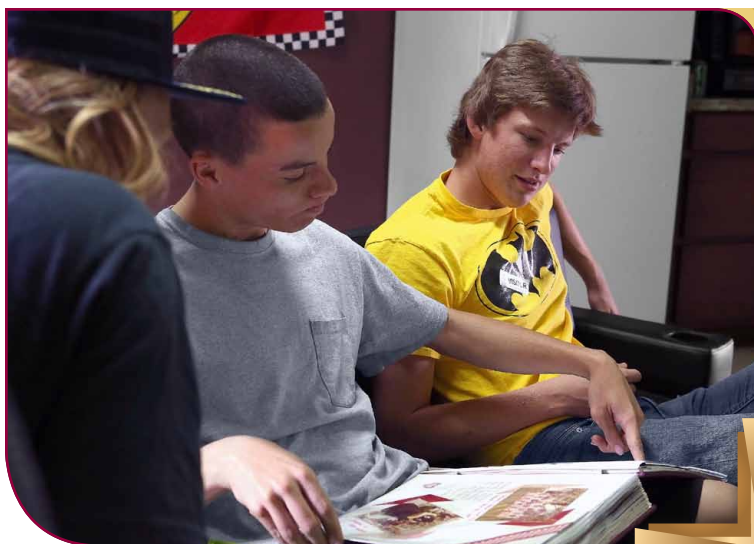
Billing specialist **Jessica Christenson**, known by many of the campus veterans as "Jess" (or their "den mother," as Colombel joked), works Monday through Friday at the Veterans Center. She helps student veterans navigate their benefits with the VA and also joins the potlucks and get-togethers. The vets also are teaching her the military lingo she needs to truly blend into their circle.

Seeing young men and women from the ongoing wars in the Middle East sharing the same space is gratifying, Christenson said. She loves coming to work for that reason and being in a position to help those who've sacrificed so much through their service.

"I think this is an area where they're on the same page," Christenson said about the range of veterans who visit the center. "From boot camp to wars ... they just see things that (many Americans) haven't seen or experienced." ■



GCU's Military Division staffers visit the Arizona Veterans Home to honor veterans during Memorial Day events. The division includes dozens of veterans who understand military service first-hand, while other counselors have experienced seeing loved ones deploy overseas. Photo by Jak Keyser



Servant Scholars Brent Porter (far right) and Brandon Kaiser (left) look through a photo album with Phoenix Dream Center resident and former foster care youth Bryan Kelly, 19. Photo by Darryl Webb

Anamaria Lup sat on a metal folding chair next to an 8-year-old girl who needed a little help with her homework.

The modest back room of the Pentecostal church in south Phoenix provided an opportunity to interact with the elementary school students on a personal level.

Lup, a sophomore forensic science major, read to the girl and helped lead a Bible study with the Mentor Kids USA after-school program. The assignment is a requirement for Grand Canyon University's Servant Scholars program, although Lup enjoys taking time out of her day to help children who might be limited in the quality time they spend with adult mentors.

GCU's Servant Scholars program provides up to \$10,000 in annual scholarships to students who demonstrate exceptional spiritual leadership in their communities and graduate with a minimum 3.25 grade-point average in high school. Mentor Kids USA is one of more than 20 ministry options available to Servant Scholars. Students such as Lup may prefer to work with young people, while others spend their ministry time helping the homeless or recovering addicts.

"I saw it as a privilege to be able to pour into the lives of these kids," said Lup, a 19-year-old native of Romania whose family immigrated through a visa lottery.

Ryan Maguire, who oversees Servant Scholars for GCU's Spiritual Life office, said the program helps develop strong spiritual leaders for the University and for the overall community in general.

"It is a program with the intention of developing young people who are achieving in academics who have a love for the Lord and a love for other people and giving them opportunities to lead on campus," said Maguire, who anticipates having a maximum roster of 150 students by this fall.

A normal week for the Servant Scholars consists of attending Chapel and "Core Group", blessing an approved outside ministry with four hours of their time, meeting with fellow Servant Scholars to keep one another accountable, taking part in monthly trainings, and setting aside prayer time to let God lead in their everyday lives. Students are also required to live on campus to fulfill a requirement of serving the student population.

Maguire called the impact of the Servant Scholars program incredible, adding that GCU's program stands out among other Christian universities for its unique blend of academics and faith-based community service. Applicants go through an

BLESSING the MEEK

Servant Scholars program stresses God, community and mentorship

— by Rachelle Reeves / Special to GCU Today Magazine



GCU Servant Scholars Olivia Heyen (right) and Anamaria Lup (far left) read to schoolchildren in south Phoenix as part of their program responsibilities. Photo by Michael Ferraresi

intense review process that now includes a video response to questions like: "Who is Jesus?", "How does a person come into a relationship with Jesus?" and "What kind of leadership experience in a ministry or church context do you have?"

The emphasis on spirituality and community service carries students into their real-world assignments. GCU partners with organizations that assist foster children, seniors, low-income families and other underprivileged members of society.

"The world's not as good as I perceived it to be – there's a lot of broken people," said **Brandon Kaiser**, one of nine GCU Servant Scholars assigned this spring to the Phoenix Dream Center Christian rehabilitation home.

The Phoenix Dream Center is located in an old Embassy Suites hotel that a non-profit organization converted into housing for people trying to free themselves of the addictions and life choices that left them homeless. Kaiser and other students work with young adults, specifically those who aged out of state-run foster care programs.

"Having the opportunity to serve here, I've really grown in awareness," Kaiser said. ■

DEVINE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Online student overcomes setbacks to earn master's in counseling

– by Bob Romantic



Denise Devine achieved a 4.0 GPA while completing her coursework for her master's degree in professional counseling. Photo courtesy of Denise Devine

When **Denise Devine** walks across the stage for commencement at GCU Arena on May 4, her dreams fulfilled, she'll do her best to tune out the thousands of people in attendance and focus on the task at hand.

But not for long.

She'll have a cheering section waiting to embrace her afterward.

"It's going to be surreal," said Devine, who will be getting her master's degree in professional counseling. "I'm starting to have a panic attack just visualizing it in my head."

For Devine, 51, the excitement surrounding the 2,600-mile trip from her home in Billerica, Mass., for commencement is understandable. It will complete a journey she first envisioned as a high school student more than 30 years ago but had plenty of obstacles along the way.

She initially postponed her goal of becoming a therapist, opting instead for a more financially viable plan to get an associate's degree and go to work as a psychiatric nurse.

On Feb. 3, 1998, that all came crashing down when Devine was kidnapped by one of her patients, tied up, strangled and sexually assaulted. She survived the ordeal, thinking only about her children **David** and **Jamie**, who were 4 years and 6 months old, respectively, at the time.

"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger," Devine said. "God was with me on that trip and He protected me and I was able to come back safely and be with my kids. ... I still think about that every day, but it doesn't rule my life. I didn't let him get the best of me. I went to counseling and did what I needed to do to get myself better.

"That's what I hope to do with other young women (as a therapist) is help them work through their issues and not give up and think their life is over because someone did something bad to them."

Recovery was difficult initially – "I didn't even want to leave my house," Devine said – but a friend, **Dawnmarie Zeller**, was instrumental in getting her back on her feet.

"She was like a pitbull," Devine said of the prodding and encouragement of Zeller, who eventually persuaded her to meet with the executive director of Merrimack Special Education Collaborative, a public school in Massachusetts for students with behavioral issues.

Devine initially worked just one hour per day, but by September of that year she was back to full time.

"I love my job," said Devine, now the lead nurse at MSEC. "We get kids who come to us kind of angry, with low self-esteem and don't want to buy into the program. But by the time they're done, they don't want to leave us."

Devine's life took another turn when her husband, **Mark Johnson**, died in July 2007. That prompted her to return to school to make a better life for herself and her children. She completed her undergraduate work online at Ashford University, then turned to Grand Canyon University to work on her master's and fulfill her dream of becoming a therapist.

She called GCU in April 2010 and connected with Enrollment Counselor **Amy Starr**.

"Honest to God, her voice is so soothing to me," Devine said. "I was nervous and anxious and didn't know if I could do it. But she has contacted me every week since then to check on me. She has been my constant, my cheerleader and my confidant. Without her, I don't know if I would be sitting here today, preparing myself for the greatest event of my life, besides my children."

On May 4, Zeller's cheering section will include Starr, Zeller, her two children, her mother and her fiancé as she makes her way across the GCU stage.

"She is an amazing woman with all of the things she's gone through and still been able to accomplish," Starr said of Devine. "And she's a 4.0 student. She deserves it; she is such an awesome lady. She will make big difference not only in her state but the lives of all the people she touches. To say she was able to accomplish her goals and go to school here, it's amazing that we had a part in that." ■



LESS SEARCH in RESEARCH

Doctoral learner develops LitAssist, a new software tool

– by Doug Carroll

Tim Anderson arrived at something in his second stint with Grand Canyon University that might have helped him in his first one.

LitAssist, Anderson's computer software for reviewing research literature, is a product for which he thinks there is an overwhelming need in the academic world. And he says he has heard agreement from as far as Singapore.

"People are hungry for this kind of software, which teaches you how to do research, what to do with it and how you put it all together," says Anderson, 46, who is graduating from GCU with a doctorate in organizational leadership (emphasis in organizational development).

Anderson, an online doctoral learner from Marshall, Minn., was an undergraduate at the University during the early 1990s, living at the North Rim Apartments on campus.

"Whenever I come back to GCU, it's like coming back home," says Anderson, who presented LitAssist at this year's Canyon Challenge entrepreneurial competition and in 2012 at an international online learning symposium in Las Vegas and at the University of Minnesota's EduTech Minnesota.

Anderson has been working in information technology for more than 20 years and teaching business and database concepts for about half that time. His IT experience and his passion for teaching led him to develop LitAssist (www.litassist.com).

He's rolling it out in May after three years of development, and he says it could be offered to students at less than \$80 per year.

"Institutions do not teach students how to organize, critically evaluate and synthesize research effectively – especially online students," Anderson says.

"Students have so many more options for (gathering) information, but it's so much more overwhelming."

Flying back to Minnesota from his first doctoral residency in Phoenix in the summer of 2010, Anderson sketched out the prototype while he was on the plane. His dissertation focused on evaluating the software's viability.

Anderson has established an LLC, Millennium III Educational Solutions, and says that although his initial goal is to sell LitAssist to colleges and universities, it could be adapted for use even at the high school level.

There is a ready-made market, he says, with full-time online enrollment in the United States expected to increase by more than 2 percent by 2015.

"It's very flexible," he says of the software. "If it's implemented early on in a degree program, you can track any research article with it."

"This is about managing data. (The software) allows you to do a quick search. The premise is to eliminate re-discovery – that alone saves time."

It also could save students, and institutions of higher learning should be interested on that basis. Over the past 50 years, the attrition rate in doctoral programs is 50 percent – generally higher in the social sciences, lower in the pure sciences.



Tim Anderson came up with the prototype for his research software on the flight back from his first doctoral residency at GCU. Photo courtesy of Tim Anderson

Research software "can help if it's built on sound learning theory, if it's implemented so that faculty and learners know why they're using it, and if faculty and administrators support it," Anderson says.

Dr. Cynthia Bainbridge, director of the Office of Academic Research in GCU's College of Doctoral Studies, sees the enormous potential of LitAssist and says it is a product whose time has come.

"Tim is incredibly hard-working, passionate and innovative," Bainbridge says. "Synthesizing research is a critical skill required by beginning researchers, and this innovative software will help our learners complete a higher-quality dissertation."

"This is the first intellectual property created as a result of doctoral research at GCU, and we are proud of Tim's scholarship and accomplishments." ■

AN 'OPPEN' MIND

Business grad turns online job-search idea into fledgling company

– by Michael Ferraresi



Humberto Valle discovered the inspiration for OppenUp, an online job-search company he founded, while studying at GCU. Photo by Michael Ferraresi

By the time **Humberto Valle** graduated with his first bachelor's degree, he briefly ran a warehouse and held project-management roles, among other gigs.

So when Valle lost his job at a Tempe engineering company a couple years ago because of the economic downturn, he was frustrated waiting one year to get back into the workforce.

"I just could not get a job," Valle said. "I had six different resumés. I was applying to so many job boards."

The experience of being unemployed led Valle to found OppenUp, a Web-based company he hopes will provide resources to help job seekers get in front of hiring managers. OppenUp blends multimedia with digital mapping of job opportunities to streamline the hiring process for both prospective employer and employee. OppenUp.com is scheduled to relaunch this spring, coinciding with Valle's graduation from the Ken Blanchard College of Business at Grand Canyon University.

"Being part of the GCU family has meant a lot, just as far as being able to talk to people there," said Valle, a Texas native who graduated from high school at 15. He briefly attended an art school in Florida before getting into mechanical engineering and later into business development.

"You not only get to meet other students, but you learn about ... what led them to those (business) ideas," Valle said.

Valle, 25, holds a mechanical engineering degree from his hometown University of Texas at El Paso. He is graduating from GCU with a bachelor's in entrepreneurship.

Valle made connections on campus that led to a little start-up cash. With a bit more funding, Valle expects OppenUp to have a stronger Web presence and more complete package to present to universities in Arizona, California and Texas.

The idea, according to OppenUp's executive summary, is to "create a more standardized, user-friendly job search platform that incorporates social interactions and video applications" as a primary source for hiring managers to prescreen potential employees. Valle said OppenUp aims to cut through the formalized, document-heavy process that costs up to \$750 per candidate through major online job search sites.

OppenUp has value with its combination of video interviews, resumés and candidate bios, he said. Recruiters and hiring managers are able to prescreen candidates faster, while job hunters can use the site to search for opportunities that once took him a year to navigate.

"People need a fast way to apply to jobs rather than going through multiple different resumés or processes, and they also need a way to stand out without going crazy," Valle said.

Valle is a member of the Chandler Rotary Club and Chandler Gangplank, a business development collaborative workspace where entrepreneurs share ideas. He also runs a separate project, LaunchPadAZ.org, which focuses on helping small businesses with digital branding.

He lives with his wife, **Diana**, and 3-year-old son, **Santiago**, in Tolleson but rents a place in Chandler to be closer to the think-tanks where he spends so much time.

Scott Taylor, incoming president of Chandler Rotary, said Valle has provided invaluable pro-bono help with social media and website redesign. Taylor described Valle as a budding entrepreneur who is constantly networking, but who also takes time out of his own busy schedule to help with Chandler Rotary community outreach events.

"He's a real dedicated guy, he's a contributor," Taylor said. "He shows up, does a great job. I've never heard him complain." ■



BREAKING BARRIERS

Transfer Bina Neuwirth finds a home in theatre program

– by Doug Carroll

They'll never be able to say that **Bina Neuwirth** didn't leave her mark on productions at Ethington Theatre on the Grand Canyon University campus.

She played a vampire slayer in "Dracula," a bombastic Greek god in "The Frogs" and a daffy homemaker in "You Can't Take It With You." In the last of those, she unintentionally made a big dent in the door of the men's restroom at Ethington while making a point during dress rehearsal.

"That was Bina's destruction of private property," she says. "It was hilarious, but I felt bad."

The door is in much better shape now, and so is Neuwirth as she graduates from GCU with a bachelor's degree in theatre performance. In the fall of 2010, she arrived as a transfer student from Phoenix College, uncertain of how she would fit in as a Jewish woman on a Christian campus.

"I was a little nervous," admits Neuwirth, 25, a Phoenix native. "I made assumptions about people, and that was foolish. Everyone here has been lovely."

She assumed, also, that the theatre program – then being restarted after a lengthy hiatus – would be decent, and it has gone "above and beyond" that. At the time, she figured it at least would be a better option than transferring to Arizona State University.

"I knew that if I went to ASU, I'd never step onstage," she says. "But I had to switch (from community college) in order to get my four-year degree. At Phoenix College, we were constantly getting cast in productions. I have a certain type I can play, and being cast is a blessing."

Neuwirth didn't always feel so comfortable about the stage. She says she was "horribly shy" as a teenager, with stage fright that lasted for years. She can still recall a community-college acting class in which her voice was trembling and her hands were shaking, but she stuck it out.

That queasy feeling is gone now.

"Like anything else, if you do something enough, your fear goes away," Neuwirth says. "It's really freeing when that happens."

"You're so open onstage. It's you, capturing a human emotion, and it's like being torn open."

Through the direction of Dean **Claude Pensis** and instructor **Michael Kary**, she says it's easy for her to see how much she has grown at GCU as a performer. If she can't find a suitable master's degree program in theatre, she says she will keep auditioning for roles.

"When we started work on 'The Cherry Orchard' this year, I could see myself taking what Claude and Michael had taught me," Neuwirth says. "I could feel it rushing at me. They've trained me so well. They're very thorough, and they're amazing at what they do."

Kary says Neuwirth's willingness to "stretch her abilities" made all the difference in her development.



Bina Neuwirth overcame stage fright and anxieties about life on a Christian campus to enjoy her three years at GCU. Photo by Michael Ferraresi

"A constant is her intelligent sense of humor," he says, "and she brought it to every role and crew position she held. She has a bright future in the entertainment industry."

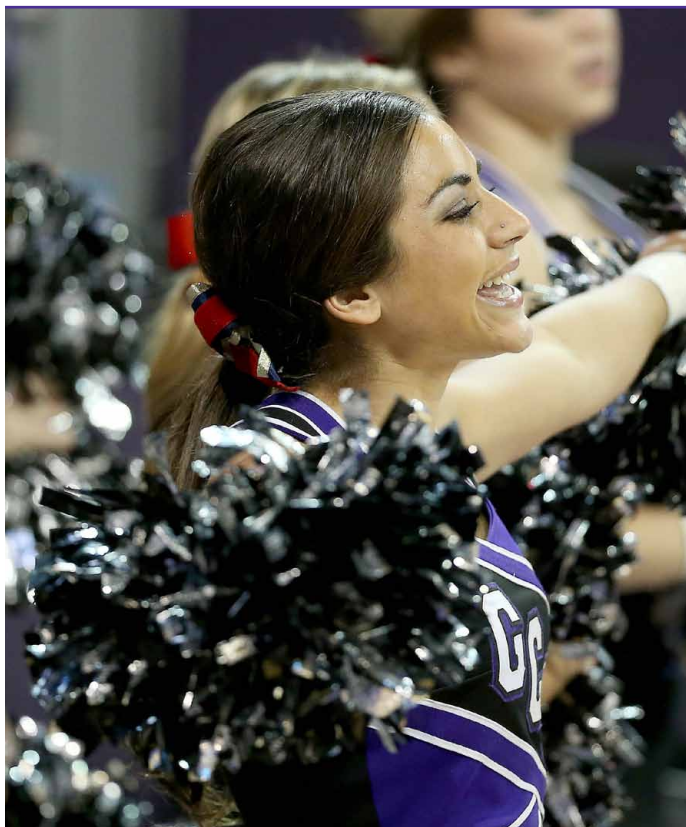
Don't ask her to choose a favorite role from those she played in three theatre seasons. She loves them all, she says, and she will miss the Ethington troupe.

"It was always fun," Neuwirth says, "a free, wonderful, hilarious, open, inviting environment to be in. It's as if there were no boundaries. I walked into this artist's haven, and at first I couldn't appreciate it." ■

BEING of GOOD CHEER

Christian studies major **Jesi Smith** embodies school pride

– by *Cooper Nelson*



Jesi Smith's relentlessly positive attitude and work ethic set the tone for GCU's cheer team for four years, and her coach says she will be missed. Photo by Darryl Webb

Cheer team captain **Jesi Smith** is difficult to replace. But **Emily Stephens** is going to try.

"At tryouts we're going to say, 'Who's going to be the next Jesi? You need to be the next Jesi,'" said Stephens, Grand Canyon University's cheer coach, who worked with Smith for four years.

"She's made a name for herself through the cheer program and as an ambassador for the University – she's the benchmark," Stephens said about the graduating senior.

Smith, 21, earned a reputation around GCU for her community service and dedication to cheering at athletic events. Basketball fans recognized her unwavering energy and the ability to bring a crowd to its feet. She led campus tours for prospective students as a student worker at the Antelope Reception Center and served as a residential life leader at Prescott Hall.

Smith is graduating with a bachelor's degree in Christian studies. She became the first to complete the program since it was reinstated in 2008. President and

CEO **Brian Mueller** thanked Smith for her service to GCU and acknowledged her as a University ambassador after the men's basketball team's loss to Chaminade University in the Pacific West Conference tournament.

Smith plans to stay on at GCU as an assistant cheer coach. She also will remain at the ARC as an events service coordinator for Discover GCU events for prospective students. She will marry **Ian Weeks** in June.

Eventually, she would like to launch her own youth Christian sports summer camp, but she said she loves GCU and finds it difficult to leave.

"It all points back to being a Christian and being where God wants you to be," said Smith, who grew up doing gymnastics in Yuma, where she attended Yuma High School.

"I love the community that this school promotes," she said. "The presence of God is really evident here."

Although her time as a student leader has ended, Smith hopes she can serve in a similar way as a full-time University employee.

"It's time to pass the baton on to another student influence, but I hope I can still be that staff influence for new students," Smith said.

As a life leader, Smith helped with community service events that cleared trash and graffiti from low-income neighborhoods. She also served as a mentor for other life leaders on campus and volunteered as part of a campus women's ministry while maintaining a 3.5 grade-point average, earning a Student of the Semester award from the College of Theology.

Danielle Rinnier, discipleship coordinator for GCU's Office of Spiritual Life, said Smith embodies Christian faith through her servant heart and desire to connect with her fellow students. Rinnier valued Smith's devotion to helping other students grow their faith.

"It's been really cool to watch her on our campus over the past four years connect with people who are different than her (personally and religiously)," said Rinnier, who served as a mentor to Smith during her time with women's ministries and as a residential life leader.

"I think she will help improve the experience of prospective students and integrate all aspects of the University into her new position with the ARC," Rinnier said.

Stephens said she cherished Smith's devotion to the University and willingness to improve as a cheerleader. She said Smith's accomplishments are even more impressive considering that she overcame a childhood heart condition and expected to be limited physically.

"As much as I'd love to keep her in uniform forever because she's the foundation (for the cheer program), I'm happy to see her move on to the next level," Stephens said. "But luckily she won't be moving very far." ■



DIFFERENTLY ABLED

Math teacher Patricia Greenough lets nothing get in her way

– by Cooper Nelson

Growing up, **Patricia Greenough** battled the stigma of learning disabilities and fought through school with the fear that she may never succeed academically.

After graduating from Corona del Sol High School in Tempe, she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in four years of study from Grand Canyon University and is working toward her doctorate. She hopes to use her experience to help students struggling with similar obstacles.

Greenough, 23, enrolled at GCU in the fall of 2008. By the spring of 2011, she had earned a bachelor's in secondary education with an emphasis in mathematics. She is graduating this month with a master's in special education cross-categorical, having earned that between January and November of 2012.

Most students take four years to complete their undergraduate studies and two for a graduate degree. But Greenough, whose maiden name is Chittenden, couldn't wait that long.

"Part of my plan included finishing my degree in three years so I could complete my master's in one," said Greenough, who struggles with dyslexia, short-term memory loss, auditory processing issues and ADHD.

"I want to be able to go out and start a gifted learning disability program to help kids like me succeed," she said.

Greenough said she coped with learning disabilities throughout high school and was often forced to implement an Individual Education Plan to ease the education process. As a high school senior, Greenough struggled to comprehend the spelling, grammar and punctuation lessons taught in her English class. Her disabilities spread across several categories, restricting her from obtaining the help she needed.

Without the support of her family, she said, she might have never graduated from high school – or become a teacher.

Greenough currently teaches freshman math and coaches freshman girls volleyball at Betty H. Fairfax High School in Laveen, where she met her husband, **A.J. Greenough**, who teaches physical education. The two married earlier this year. Patricia Greenough was highly involved during her time at GCU, serving as a member of the Associated Students of GCU and as a resident assistant on campus.

She has deep roots at GCU, with more than 60 members of her family having attended the University since it opened in 1949. She said her grandparents attended the University, then Grand Canyon College, in its early years. Seemingly everyone – from her parents to her siblings and cousins – has been an Antelope at one time or another. Even her husband earned his master's degree from GCU.

Her family history is so significant that the University has a family-tree portrait hanging in the Tell Science computer lab. She currently has eight family members at GCU, including younger sister and upcoming senior **Jenna Chittenden**; older sister **Kimberly Klem**, who works as an enrollment counselor at GCU's Peoria site; and Director of Athletics **Keith Baker**, her second cousin.



Patricia Greenough teaches a freshman algebra class at Betty H. Fairfax High School in Laveen. The 23-year-old is one of more than 60 people in her family to have attended GCU. Photo by Michael Ferraresi

"The Baker side is the base of it all. My grandparents came over from Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl," said Baker, who has been part of the GCU community for more than 30 years as a student, athlete and employee. "Even when I went to school here, there were always cousins on the same dorm floor as me."

Greenough is proud of her heritage at the University, adding that without the support of her parents and relatives she wouldn't have been able to persevere and succeed.

"My family has always encouraged me and told me that I can do anything," Greenough said. "They never let my disabilities become an excuse or hold me back." ■

Grand Canyon University
3300 W. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85017



GCU ARENA UPCOMING EVENTS



CHRIS TOMLIN: BURNING LIGHTS TOUR*

Wednesday, May 1

2013 GCU COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES

Thursday, May 2 • Friday, May 3 • Saturday, May 4

TEXAS TENORS*

Monday, May 13

PROMISE KEEPERS*

Friday, May 17 and Saturday, May 18

SANCTUS REAL: THE PROMISES TOUR*

Sunday, May 19

HILLSONG UNITED: WELCOMEZION TOUR 2013*

Saturday, June 8

RHETT WALKER COME TO THE RIVER TOUR

Tuesday, June 11

VEGGIE TALES LIVE*

Sunday, Oct. 13 • (On Sale THA)

GCU BASKETBALL 2013-14 SEASON TICKET PACKAGES STARTING AT JUST \$50!

Call 602-639-8979 or visit GCUArena.com/seasonix

Please visit GCUArena.com for a complete list of event times and details.



GCUArena.com | 602-639-8999
3300 W. Camelback Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85017
*Group discounts call 602-639-8972