

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY'S MAGAZINE

GCU today

MAY 2015

The Sky's No Limit

How The Grove, Lopes Way and other additions will supercharge campus atmosphere



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GCU'S HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
STARTING FALL 2015

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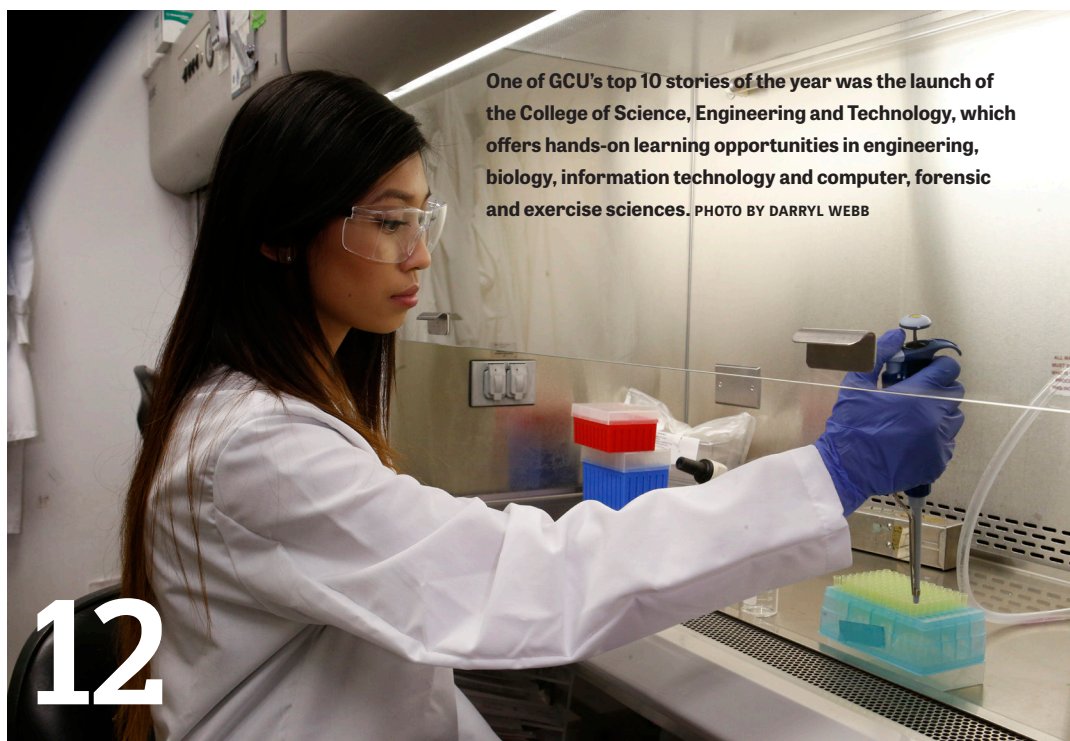


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One of GCU's top 10 stories of the year was the launch of the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, which offers hands-on learning opportunities in engineering, biology, information technology and computer, forensic and exercise sciences. PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

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Teachers and students alike have benefited from the new Integration of Faith, Learning and Work program, led by the College of Theology.
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The University has broadened its tutoring efforts, and the results have been a study in the pluses of getting students more connected.

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The baseball team aims to win the Western Athletic Conference regular-season title as it competes in NCAA Division I for the second year.
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Four new six-story residence halls for freshmen and an outdoor food court called "Lopes Way" will transform campus life.



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ON THE COVER: Acacia Hall is one of four new six-story residence halls in The Grove, the freshmen-only complex that will anchor the northwest corner of campus in the fall. That area will serve as the cornerstone for a campus expansion that includes several other new buildings and a complete revamping of dining options.

PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB



Sound Bites

If you could bury four things in a time capsule on GCU's campus, what would they be?

An aerial campus photo before 2000, the Western Athletic Conference letter confirming GCU's move into NCAA Division I sports, a list of events held on campus in 2014-15 and our most recent CONHCP licensure pass rates.

TJ Land, professor, College of Nursing and Health Care Professions

A brick from the old Fleming Library, a cross, a purple GCU pen and a plush Thunder toy.

Francisco Lira, GCU junior

An image of Thunder with a GCU doctrinal statement rolled up in his hand, a set of campus maps and photos from different years, a University brochure of faculty and staff members' thoughts about GCU's future and a notebook of reflections from current students.

Dr. Galyna Kufryk, professor, College of Science, Engineering and Technology

A lock of hair from Lopes basketball player Daniel Alexander, a current student ID, a North Rim Apartments original roof shingle and a set of Mein Bowl chopsticks.

Abbie Ploeser, GCU junior

BE THERE

May

1-3 and 8-10

WAC BASEBALL

In their final homestand of the season, the Lopes host Seattle and Bakersfield in series that may be key to their Western Athletic Conference regular-season title hopes. Brazell Stadium. gculopes.com

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BIG DADDY WEAVE

The band with Mobile, Ala., roots is joined by fellow Christian recording artists Jason Gray, Citizen Way and Lauren Daigle. 7:30 p.m., GCU Arena. gcuarena.com

Big Daddy Weave



June

7

BOOGIE DA BEAT

Hip-hop dancers and dance troupes compete and inspire the local community through their body-shaking art form. GCU Arena. gcuarena.com

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WORSHIP IN THE CANYON

Australia's Hillsong Young & Free brings its message of experiencing true freedom that is found only in Jesus Christ to GCU Arena. Joining the group is the United Kingdom's Grammy-nominated Matt Redman. 6:30 p.m. gcuarena.com

July

11-16

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

Volunteers help thousands of underprivileged local children pick out donated clothing and educational supplies for the 2015-16 school year. GCU Arena

August

17-22

WELCOME WEEK

Throngs of new undergraduates and their families hit campus, and purple-clad GCU volunteers are ready to greet them during the University's heartfelt Move-In for new students Monday-Tuesday, Aug. 17-18, and for returning students Wednesday-Friday, Aug. 19-21.

A variety of events are planned, including a new student worship session, the "Ignite" candlelight ceremony, Movie on the Lawn, and sand volleyball and dodgeball tournaments. Classes begin Monday, Aug. 24. gcu.edu/welcomeweek



Opt In



What's your favorite place at GCU?

- ☐ Arena
- ☐ Student Union
- ☐ Thunder Alley/Thunderground
- ☐ Quad
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Fitness centers
- ☐ Athletic fields
- ☐ Swimming pools

Vote for two and check results at news.gcu.edu.

Results from the last poll

What's your favorite recurring GCU event?

Plays/concerts	33.3%
Athletics	20%
Chapel	16%
Move-In	9%
Fall Festival	6.6%
Run to Fight Children's Cancer	6.4%
Commencement	5.3%
Serve the City	3.4%





Got Your Number

GCU will celebrate its traditional and non-traditional graduates during three days of ceremonies this week. We predict a plethora of purple balloons and bouquets, along with proud parents and other family members, will make spring commencement a memorable time for all. Some details about the Class of 2015:

10,666

Total traditional and non-traditional graduates

3,988

Total grads accepting invitations to ceremonies

82

 Percent of traditional grads from Arizona

71

 Percent of declared female traditional grads

4,135

Total College of Nursing and Health Care Professions grads, the most of any college

93

 Age of oldest grad

11/21/95

Birthdate of youngest grad (19)



In GCU Event Services, each week begins with a group prayer and ends with a well-deserved good night's sleep.

The team is known for its hard work, smiling faces and enthusiasm, and it all starts with Helen Bleach (bottom row, center). PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

5 ON 5 WITH

Helen Bleach, Event Services

If you've been to a GCU event, you've probably noticed the indelible spirit and sense of community that permeates the crowd. The well-organized sea of purple is made possible by the campus Event Services team. GCU Today talked with Helen Bleach, senior director of university relations and campus events, to find out how the events come together, from Move-In to commencement.

1 GCU hosts so many events during the year and your team is an integral part of each.

What's the granddaddy of them all? There are so many, but Move-In provides a first impression for incoming students, and we do all we can for Student Engagement to make it the best each year. Also, we strive to make our men's basketball games special and exciting for all.

2 What's involved in planning spring commencement? When does it start, how many staff and volunteers are involved and when do you rest?

We actually have three commencements — in October, December and April — so the planning really never stops. Jennifer Girl, director of campus events, is the commencement guru and makes the magic happen each time with help from nearly 400 volunteers. The couch in my office gets a lot of use by Jennifer the night before ceremonies. She brings her sleeping bag in and camps here.

3 Through the looking glass, it seems that every event goes off without a hitch. Can you describe a humorous time when it wasn't as picture perfect on the inside as it was on the outside?

Just this year, one of our basketball halftime acts got lost on their way to campus from their hotel. I didn't think they were going to make it in time so I ran over to Emily Stephens, our cheer coach, and said, "You're up — do your nationals routine or something." She looked at me as the color drained from her face and said, "Got it." The girls hadn't practiced or warmed up for that, but it was all we had. Thankfully, two minutes before halftime, the act made it. But that is what we do. We get it done.

4 What does it take to pull off Move-In? We've heard it's five days long this fall.

It takes everyone, plain and simple. Every department on campus works tirelessly to make Move-In happen. But it wouldn't be possible without our audio/video department, Facilities, Catering and Student Engagement.

5 Your team has the best potlucks. What's the favorite dish?

It's so random — from Mexican food and mac and cheese, to Japanese cabbage salad and water chestnuts wrapped in bacon.

MICHAEL FERRARESI

Oh, Yeah?

in Washington, D.C., to host education summits to raise students' understanding of the factors leading to the Nazis' systematic extermination of Jews, political prisoners and other minority

GCU was among five American universities selected by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

groups during World War II. A partner in the museum's Levine Institute for Holocaust Education, the University hosted the first Belfer First Step Holocaust Summit this spring, which more than 30 GCU undergraduate and graduate students attended. Dr. Michael Trevillion, the College of Education director of academic programs who secured the partnership with the national museum, said GCU

students will have similarly exclusive access to unique evidence, texts, multimedia and expert speakers at future events. Trevillion, a former middle-school history teacher, said the University's commitment will provide a high level of Holocaust training for future educators, which is particularly important today given the methodical slayings of minority groups in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Leap of Faith and Learning

Faculty finds ways to more fully integrate Christian worldview into classroom

BY RICK VACEK

Microbiology is generally not the sort of class where you expect to hear a lot of prayer unless there's a big exam coming up. But when Dr. Daisy Savarirajan introduced a daily devotional into her microbiology classes at Grand Canyon University, the reaction was atomic.

"Many of them were happy with the prayer we do to start the class because they truly feel that they kind of get stressed out by the stuff they are required to learn," she said. "Starting with the prayer calms them down, and we have seen a difference in the lab environment."

And when she did a written survey of the students asking them a simple question — Did it strengthen your personal faith in Jesus Christ? — the response was overwhelming, with 90 percent responding that it did. "Some of them said they never really realized that science and Scripture can go hand in hand and not be highly contradicting things. They were very happy to see some of the dots that could get connected. They could see the big picture."

Savarirajan's experience mirrors that of other instructors who have been inspired by GCU's Integration of Faith, Learning and Work initiative, which began in 2013 under the direction of Dr. Jason Hiles, dean of the College of Theology.

The centerpiece of the program is a monthly "Lunch and Learn" at which faculty members gather at Howerton Hall to eat lunch and hear one of their peers talk about assimilating faith into the classroom. Hiles also does a presentation, and attendees are given time to tackle discussion topics in small groups.

"I think it's been tremendously successful in the second year," Hiles



said. “What I’ve found is that there’s a genuine interest — the faculty is beginning to drive this, not just at the Lunch and Learns but in general — and there’s strong leadership in each college. It’s bringing to a head something that’s already happening elsewhere on campus, just in little pockets.

“So when we come together, what they tend to get excited about is when one of their colleagues leads off and says, ‘Hey, here’s what I’m doing.’ That’s where they start asking questions. What I’m really doing is just making the conversation happen, and then I offer a little bit of insight into the Christian world.”

As part of the program, the University also hosted on campus a public speaker series featuring a group from Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, Detroit pastor Christopher Brooks and philosophers Dr. Paul Copan and Dr. J.P. Moreland.

The time is now

After a series of informal conversations, the idea formally took root in 2013 when GCU President/CEO Brian Mueller gathered a group of 40 prominent faculty and staff members to get their ideas about how to integrate and reinforce the program in the curriculum. Hiles spent the 2013-14 school year organizing introductory presentations and roundtable discussions at all of the colleges and preparing for the Lunch and Learns and a separate speaker series in 2014-15.

When he attended the Lunch and Learn in January, Mueller noted that the Integration of Faith, Learning and Work is especially important because the University will be making significant faculty hires in the coming years. “I don’t think there’s a better, more opportune time to do this than right now,” he told the audience.

Dr. Hank Radda, GCU’s provost, said the challenge was to determine how to implement the program in a thoughtful but expedient manner.

“You want to integrate more into the classroom, integrate more into the curriculum, but that’s not a quick change. It’s a process, and we began with the faculty,” Radda said.

“We started brainstorming with faculty in all the colleges and asked them for their ideas, which were very helpful. We began formulating our plans the second year, then worked on specific courses and areas in the curriculum, delving a little more deeply into each college.”

For the 2015-16 school year, pending input from the administration, Hiles said, “I’d like to open the door a little more to the conversation about work. We’ve talked about the integration of faith and learning in discipline-specific areas, and it just comes out implicitly, ‘This is what I do for work.’ I’d like to make it a little more explicit.”

Faculty benefits, too

An interesting dichotomy of the Lunch and Learns is that while each of the faculty presenters got huge support from peers in their own college, regular attendees said they also benefited greatly from listening to someone in an unrelated field.

The dynamic of introducing prayer into, say, a business classroom is far different from doing it in the College of Theology, but the idea is the same.

“I found it very inspiring,” said Dr. Pete Charpentier, an assistant theology professor. “I learned how to do a lot of things better. One of the things you always have to be careful of is doing things the same way and getting into ruts.”

Anna Faith Smith, assistant dean of COT, said, “It’s really critical for

Lunch and Learn Presenters



Cindy Seminoff, College of Science, Engineering and Technology: “I try to get students to think about how this relates to their lives. It’s so exciting to see their passion for Christ. I see it in the way they interact in class.”



Michael Kary, College of Fine Arts and Production: Said there are two kinds of opportunities in integrating faith into acting: providential (daily focus on who put you here) and intentional (know your course and your students).



Ben VanDerLinden, College of Humanities and Social Sciences: “My work is teaching, and in teaching I find ways to support and ways to challenge, which for me is an integral part of living out faith.”



Dr. Moronke Oke, Colangelo College of Business: “The key is sincerity. Your life will speak to the students. They see you as human, someone who has been in their shoes, someone who cares about them.”



Ben Vilkas and Lisa Bernier, College of Education: Recommended getting students to lead devotions in class, go on mission trips, volunteer and engage in deeper philosophical discussions.



Sherri Spicer, College of Nursing and Health Care Professions: “Integrating faith into the classroom in the College of Nursing directly relates to our understanding of nursing as a calling rather than a career.”

the faculty to derive a sense of comfort when they speak to the students in this way. If people think it’s safe, they’re empowered.”

The ultimate comfort is for students, of course — and not just while they’re at GCU. As Radda put it, “The reality of this will be how they carry their faith into their profession and the working world. Students have to make it specific to their discipline to make the conversation more relevant.”

But the benefits go both ways. As much as Savarirajan was amazed by the impact prayer had on the students, some of whom had never prayed by themselves, she also saw what it did for her.

“I am a Christian and I am also a scientist, so it makes sense to me,” she said. “There’s a purpose. I can see the whole big picture of why God has created us. As I observe His creation, everything makes sense. It helps me to know Him better — not to know *about* Him, but to know *Him*.”

Savarirajan was particularly moved by the survey response of one student: “Coming to GCU really made me take control of my faith and make it personal to me because I no longer am able to piggyback on my school’s or family’s religion but had to work on my own relationship with Christ.”

Amen to that. **G**



Sophomores Aaron Widger and Brittney Poggiogalle work with GCU tutor Bryce Beatty, a junior, in the University's Learning Lounge.

PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

University expands tutoring efforts to reach more students

Brain Gain

BY JANIE MAGRUDER

“To teach is to learn twice.” — *French essayist Joseph Joubert*

As a student at Canby High in northwestern Oregon, Bryce Beatty filled his days with chemistry, honors biology, advanced placement physics and playing shortstop for the baseball team.

But when he came to Grand Canyon University in 2012, Beatty traded his mitt and jersey for latex gloves and an apron. For the then freshman, focusing on his major — biology with an emphasis in pre-med — required protection for his hands and clothing in GCU's cadaver lab.

Despite his considerable high school science background, Beatty knew he would need some help in chemistry as he pursued a career in spine surgery. As soon as he arrived on campus, he requested tutoring help from the Center for Learning & Advancement (CLA).

Now a junior in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology,

Beatty is one of GCU's top science tutors. He helped inspire University leaders to restructure the tutoring system and is assisting with its success.

There's extra credit, of course: “If you can teach it, you know it,” he said.

Narrowing the focus

Tutoring has evolved over the past 18 months during a perfect storm of change at GCU. The administration wanted to boost the membership and profile of its Honors Institute and study abroad program, both housed in the CLA, and expand course content on the rapidly growing ground campus.

It became clear that offering tutoring specific to University degree programs was a must, and if it was more fun, interactive and accessible, all the better.

Through their experiences in the CLA last year, Beatty and other tutors had noticed gaps in students' abilities to complete homework, study for

tests and grasp increasingly difficult concepts. With the guidance of Dr. Joe Veres, director of student development and outreach, the tutors began working with GCU faculty on a tiered remediation and enrichment plan.

“We began to look at some classes where students weren’t too successful — freshman math, for example — and said, ‘How can we be more proactive and start building this series?’” Veres said. “The tutors dissected the courses on their own and with faculty.”

They came up with three tiers in four subject areas: math, writing, Excel (primarily for accounting majors) and science, with a focus on anatomy, physiology and physics. The tiers are designed to (1) remove deficiencies, (2) work toward mastery of the material and (3) build concepts and critical thinking. The After Dark Series was launched in January, four nights a week for 15 weeks in two campus locations, no appointments needed.

To gear up for After Dark, Trish Anderson, an alumna who is working on a doctorate in educational leadership at GCU, was hired as program manager of University tutoring.

“We already have established an open-door policy with our faculty, and it’s awesome to have them feeling comfortable to come in and talk with us,” said Anderson, a former high school teacher with a master’s degree in educational administration.

The new system has an early alert component that’s triggered when a student’s work is subpar and tutoring is requested by a professor.

Dr. Mark Wireman, an assistant professor of anatomy and physiology, was among the faculty members who gave the tutors resources such as course review guides and PowerPoints to ensure consistency between classroom learning and tutoring. Wireman also directs students to Science After Dark if they can’t drop by during his office hours or attend study sessions.

“I haven’t seen this type of program before as we have set it up,” he said. “There is more collaboration between the faculty and the student tutors, which I think benefits the students. I feel that it’s successful, too, because students are more available during the evenings.”

Sophomore biology majors Aaron Widger and Brittney Poggiogalle routinely attend the Science After Dark sessions on Wednesdays. Widger prefers large group sessions, while Poggiogalle does better in one-on-one tutoring. Thankfully, both are available now at GCU.

Poggiogalle, like Beatty, sought tutoring as a freshman at the CLA and credits the center for teaching her to study effectively. This year, her classes are more challenging, and she works with Beatty as many as four times a week, gathering up friends to join, too. “We all struggle together,” she said, laughing.

Poggiogalle, 20, is getting the A’s she wants, but that’s not all. Beatty is teaching her to be a tutor.

“If I can tutor Brittney a concept in physics and she can teach it to Aaron, that reinforces the concept for her,” he said.

The bonus: “It definitely is fun,” said Widger, 19, who never imagined physics could be so understandable. “You make friends, they get some music going to keep it light. It’s definitely welcoming.”

Not reinventing the wheel

GCU didn’t have to look far for a successful model on which to base its enhanced tutoring. A successful approach already was raising test scores of a very different clientele right in its own backyard or, more precisely, in Building 16 on campus.

The Learning Lounge, a free afterschool tutoring program for students at nearby Alhambra High, a once underperforming school, was launched by GCU in September 2013. The lounge gave Alhambra students a fun, safe, welcoming place to work on their reading, writing and math skills, one-on-one and in groups with GCU student tutors. The program later was extended to students in the Phoenix Union High and the Alhambra Elementary School Districts.

“The University wanted to create personal connections with its students in a bright environment with snacks and giveaways and have its tutors feel part of a team,” Veres said.

The lounge has no shortage of enticements — free food, T-shirts, mugs and other giveaways — and has grown into a family led by the tutors.

“The Learning Lounge received a lot of recognition because it was different — it’s a public-private partnership and kids showed up and looked forward to being there,” Veres said. “(GCU President/CEO) Brian Mueller wanted all tutoring to look like this, and that didn’t mean a couple of fake plants and couches in a room. The relationships that we built with the high school we wanted our University

students to have, too, with their peers in this setting.”

But if the hands-on nature of the lounge was to be preserved, more help would be needed. The student tutors were joined last fall by 675 GCU freshmen who began volunteering at the Learning Lounge as part of their scholarship requirements. They were trained to work with the K-12 students, and the student tutors began teaching their peers.

Building on success

With the launch last fall of GCU’s College of Science, Engineering and Technology, the opening in August of its new Engineering Building and a goal of having 70 percent of GCU’s enrollment in STEM majors by 2020, the Learning Lounge has much to do.

This fall, as many as 85 GCU student tutors and 675 student scholarship recipients will be working in Building 16 and in new outposts in the University’s library and the Engineering Building. A tutoring facility also will be housed in The Grove, a complex of four residence halls for freshmen opening in August, as well as study rooms in those dorms.

“They will carry that ‘family mentality’ over to the University side, where they can maintain the relationship building and customer service that they’ve learned in K-12,” Anderson said.


And they will continue to emphasize the Learning Lounge’s successful teaching mantra of demonstrating a skill, practicing it together and handing it off to the learner — “I do, we do, you do.”

It’s worked for Poggiogalle: “Without tutoring, I would not be where I am now. I didn’t think I could do physics, but now I know I can.” **G**

How to obtain tutoring:

- A. Drop by the University Learning Lounge in Building 16, just west of the Intramural Field**
- B. Visit gcu.edu/bookatutor**
- C. Call 602-639-8901**
- D. Do any or all of the above**

Answer: D



Breathtaking sunsets have become part of the scene at Brazell Stadium, the Lopes' home turf, which provides a vibrant fan experience on the Phoenix campus. PHOTOS BY DARRYL WEBB

Expanding Its Horizon

BY MICHAEL FERRARESI

Baseball team looks to bright future filled with WAC titles, national prominence

Players on Grand Canyon University's baseball team recite their goal like a mantra that has been ingrained in their psyches.

Never mind batting averages or earned runs. Disregard the last game's box score. Ignore the pro scouts who sometimes congregate in the seats behind home plate.

The team's immediate goal is simple: win the Western Athletic Conference, shock some established teams in the process and build the framework for a program that can contend for the College World Series when it becomes eligible in 2018.

When he took over before the 2012 season, former big-leaguer Andy Stankiewicz brought a rebuilding mentality to the baseball program but took the team to the NCAA Division II Baseball Championship in just his second year as coach. Now, in its second year of the four-year transition process to Division I, GCU has already established itself as one of the top teams in the WAC and a team that can compete with anyone at the D-I level.

Since its inaugural season in the WAC last year, the baseball team has played upset artist against top D-I opponents and placed players in nationally recognized summer leagues. Meanwhile, Brazell Stadium has developed a GCU Arena-like energy for home games, making it more enjoyable for students and more aggravating for opponents.

Stankiewicz said the hooting, hollering and heckling from students who have trekked to Brazell from their residence halls or classrooms helps the team maintain its laser focus on winning the WAC.

"That's kind of been the dream since we got here and why we loved

the idea of having the stadium right on campus. The louder they are, the better," said Stankiewicz, a longtime infielder who ended his seven-year MLB career with the Arizona Diamondbacks in 1998.

GCU players talk about how, 20 years from now, whether they work in baseball or not, they will reflect on being part of the teams that reshaped the program.

Aside from the dream to play for throngs of enthusiastic fans, the Lopes also consider the CWS in Omaha, Neb., an attainable long-term goal. Stankiewicz played for Pepperdine from 1983 to 1986 and appeared in the CWS regionals twice, though his club was eliminated by Stanford and Arizona.

He later coached in Omaha as an assistant at Arizona State, but those teams also fell short in national-title bids. Still, those experiences shaped him as a competitor and coach.

"It's something I'd love for the guys to experience someday," Stankiewicz said.

"It's a dream of mine to take Grand Canyon to the College World Series, and it should be a dream for every player and coach here."

The WAC era

Moving up to D-I meant taking on stiffer competition, mainly in nonconference games.

This season, the Lopes swept a three-game series at Cal Poly, which made the CWS regionals in the past two seasons. At Brazell, GCU shut out UNLV and split a two-game series with Kansas before losing six of



Lopes players gather along one of the baselines at Brazell during a recent game.

seven games during a challenging stretch at Tennessee, Oklahoma State and UNLV. Last year, the Lopes upset Arizona and UC Irvine, which have a combined six national tournament appearances since 2010.

Stankiewicz, ever focused on his team's collective character, said he wants his players to leave GCU with a degree and with memories of key victories like those.

"It's about understanding that we can play with anyone in the country," said Stankiewicz, who last year was named Coach of the Year for leading the 18-and-under U.S. national team to a gold medal in the Pan American Games in Mexico.

"I'm not ashamed to say that, and I'm not trying to be bragging or boastful. If you have a guy on the mound throwing strikes and you have a competitive lineup that knows what do with bats in their hands, you can sneak up on some people."

This year's offensive standouts include junior shortstop Paul Panaccione and senior second baseman Chad De La Guerra — solid defenders who provide run production in the heart of the Lopes' lineup from traditionally light-hitting positions.

Also getting off to a good start this season was the entire starting outfield, which included junior transfer Brandon Smith, a cleanup hitter drafted by the Washington Nationals at his previous university, senior base-stealer David Walker and freshman Garrison Schwartz.

WAC conference play began this spring with the Lopes sweeping a three-game home series from North Dakota, preparing them for eight weeks of conference play. It will be capped by a May 14-16 road trip to Sacramento State, which won the 2014 WAC title and beat ASU in the CWS regionals last spring.

Stankiewicz and his assistants, each of whom has CWS experience as a player or coach, often remind their players that if Sac State can do it, so can the Lopes.

"Stank is that kind of guy," said De La Guerra, a junior college transfer from California. "He's always pushing us."

Shaping a national program

Andrew Naderer, GCU's No. 1 starter this season, said the coaching staff helps keep him and other players focused more on team wins than impressing scouts.

When senior ace Jorge Perez, a New York Yankees draft pick who returned to GCU rather than sign a professional contract, suffered an injury early in the season, Naderer and other pitchers stepped up.

FULL COUNT

Lopes baseball by the numbers:

78	Baseball alumni drafted by Major League Baseball clubs
14	Alumni who've played at least one game in "The Show"
4	Lopes' national championships (1980-82 and 1986) under the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

2,283

Combined MLB games played by alumni Tim Salmon (Los Angeles Angels), John Patterson (San Francisco Giants) and Cody Ransom (eight teams, including the Arizona Diamondbacks)

SOURCES: BASEBALL-REFERENCE.COM, BASEBALL-ALMANAC.COM AND GCULOPES.COM

Naderer also turned a temporary assignment in the prestigious collegiate wood-bat Cape Cod Baseball League into a full-time summer gig, earning a spot in the league's all-star game among the NCAA's top talent. He was the first GCU player ever placed on a Cape League roster. Stankiewicz wants to get more Lopes in similar national summer leagues to expose them to the best players in the country, bolster their confidence and expand recognition of GCU's program.

Stankiewicz's staff recruited Naderer from Arcadia High in Phoenix, and the junior left-hander said, "The biggest draw for me was the coaching staff. The relationship I had with them right when they walked into my house and talked to me, I just knew they had me and my best interests in mind, not just for baseball, but in life."

Mike Vaught, GCU's vice president of athletics, credited University staff for creating more buzz around Brazell this season. By the end of March, the stadium already had exceeded last year's total attendance. Promotional giveaways such as free hot dogs and black T-shirts for a "Black Out Night" have helped build the student fan base to a crowd that for years included more parents and girlfriends of players than casual fans.

The 35th Avenue parking garage that looms beyond Brazell's right-field wall has become something of a symbol for the program, too. Fans tailgate on the top floor and drape signs off the facade, which the athletic department took note of and duplicated with a huge "Game Day" baseball banner.

"When you're trying to get that program image up to where you want it, the marketing and customer service factors into helping Andy build that championship program," said Vaught, who believes the baseball program is among the most likely to claim GCU's first D-I title. "With the recruiting class they have coming in, with the way they manage the program, I think they're off to a good start."

As the old baseball adage suggests, it's a marathon, not a sprint. But with the right perspective, Omaha really isn't that far away, after all. **G**

GCU YEAR IN

Community, growth, academics influence our Top 10 picks



Jerry Colangelo

1 GCU revs economic engine in west Phoenix

The University announced a five-point plan to revitalize the neighborhood, continued expanding its campus along the Canyon Corridor, agreed to operate and began renovating Maryvale Golf Course, and opened a hotel to train students in hospitality management and employ local residents. A study credited GCU with an annual economic impact of \$1.1 billion that generates 10,490 jobs, with wages approaching \$500 million per year.

2 What's in a name? A lot, when it's Colangelo

GCU's business school was renamed for Phoenix icon Jerry Colangelo, whose principles of servant leadership, ethics and entrepreneurship became as ingrained into campus life as he did in just a few short months. As part of the hospitality curriculum, the college also announced plans for golf course and tennis management programs.

3 It's full STEM ahead as 8th college opens

Determined to fill high-tech employment gaps, GCU launched the College of Science, Engineering and Technology and introduced programs in computer science, information technology and engineering. The University also opened medical school slots for qualified CSET grads in a deal with Glendale's Midwestern University and was lauded by the Obama administration for STEM Scholars, a partnership with high schools that awards college credits to worthy teens.

4 Building community through Habitat project

The University formed a unique partnership with Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona to involve neighborhood residents, students and staff in the renovation of hundreds of homes. At the first workday in January, 200 volunteers tore down fences, erected siding, painted and cleaned up. By the end of the semester, 25 homes had been improved with 10 more pending over the summer.



5 Record numbers sum up rise in enrollment

GCU welcomed a record 6,200 students into the residence halls during three days of Move-In in August, bringing total ground enrollment to nearly 11,000, up from 8,200 in 2013-14. The growth necessitated the University's first winter commencement. The number of online students grew to about 55,000.

REVIEW 2014-15



6 Return to nonprofit status considered

The administration formed an independent committee to investigate alternatives to its investment-based business model, including a return to nonprofit status, which the University held from 1949 to 2004. The decision would not impact GCU's upward academic trajectory, online operations, partnerships, outreach or future plans to grow ground enrollment to 25,000, GCU executives said.

7 Explosive growth continues with building boom

To prepare for the growth in the number of students living on campus, the University built three new dorms, another classroom building, two more campus eateries and a second parking garage. More than 2,000 seats were added to GCU Arena, and construction began on four six-story residence halls, an engineering building and a third parking garage.

(See pages 14-19 for details)

8 Men's basketball program leaps even higher

The men's basketball team debuted on the national stage when it played Kentucky at legendary Rupp Arena. The Lopes finished 17-15, were second in the Western Athletic Conference for the first time and received their second consecutive postseason tournament invitation. Moreover, the University highlighted and made financial contributions to a dozen local charities at home games.

9 Center for Worship Arts makes beautiful music

The University's new Center for Worship Arts, which scored the music education equivalent of a Grammy Award by hiring MercyMe founder and lead singer Bart Millard as its director, got off to a strong start and crescendoed with "Showcase" events at the end of each semester. The center also released its first extended play, "Canyon Worship." Students are training for careers in the industry, from worship leaders and lighting techs to songwriters and national recording artists.

Bart Millard



10 No arguing with success of speech and debate team

In just its second year, GCU's speech and debate team continued to shine, ranking No. 15 in the country after a strong showing at the prestigious Pi Kappa Delta national championships and winning a second straight championship in individual events at the national Christian colleges tournament in March.



GCU opened the basketball season by playing at No. 1-ranked Kentucky.

Building Momentum

STORY BY RICK VACEK
PHOTOS BY DARRYL WEBB

Expansion will construct an even loftier sense of community at GCU



T

Tim Griffin used to live right next to Disneyland, so close, he said, “I could have broken a window in the Disneyland Hotel. I could look out my window at 9:35 and watch the fireworks every night. We would walk from the front door of our house in Anaheim and be at the front gate of Disneyland in less than 15 minutes — with strollers.”

These days, as pastor and dean of students at Grand Canyon University, Griffin likes to stroll around a campus that soon will have a Disney-style hub of outdoor dining. Main Street USA, meet Lopes Way.

But that isn't the only major change that has Griffin and others — including those who haven't even lived here yet — buzzing about what's ahead.

Under construction are four six-story residence halls in a complex called The Grove at the northwest corner of campus, an adjacent parking garage and an engineering building on Camelback Road next to Ethington Theatre. Scheduled to be built over the summer are food outlets and eating areas along Lopes Way, a new soccer stadium next to Antelope Gym, a four-story office building in a central location and a student entertainment center in Thunder Alley. (See map on Pages 16-17)

It is a dramatic shift in the look and feel of a campus that by the end of 2015 will have grown from 900 to 15,000 students and from 100 to 240 acres in just seven years. And the centerpiece will be Lopes Way, which with new outdoor dining areas will be the heartbeat of campus in the same way Main Street USA leads to Frontierland, Fantasyland and Tomorrowland.

“What we're envisioning is that it's going to turn into a huge culture-builder,” Griffin said. “It's going to be like a European promenade where you walk around and you have people eating inside and outside. I think it's going to be a great hangout zone.”

Like everything at GCU, the design is purposeful, said President/CEO Brian Mueller. “When parents and students come on to our campus, we want them to have a sense of community, fellowship, friendship, kindness and compassion,” Mueller said. “And we want to take advantage of one of the greatest things Arizona has to offer — weather.”

Here, then, is your forecast to all the attractions that will open at GCU in just a few months. Get ready for a wild ride.

A new era is dawning at GCU with the rise of the engineering building (foreground) and four new six-story residence halls in The Grove (top of photo).









Engineering Building



Soccer Stadium

RENDERINGS COURTESY OF SUOLL ARCHITECTS



Soccer Stadium

Grove Garage

A Grand Expansion

THE GROVE

- Four six-story residence halls plus swimming pool, fitness center, convenience store, office space, two lighted artificial turf intramural fields and two lighted half-court basketball courts
- Acacia, Ironwood and Willow Halls: 866 freshmen each; Juniper Hall: 812 freshmen plus offices on first floor
- Two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a living room in each suite
- Three residential directors per hall compared to two in other halls on campus

GROVE GARAGE

- 2,450 spaces, students only
- By comparison, the garage next door on 35th Avenue has 1,380 spaces and the Camelback garage has 1,636.

ENGINEERING BUILDING

- Four-story structure with four lecture halls, 14 classrooms, eight science labs, three cadaver labs, a recording studio and a 3-D printer space

THUNDER ALLEY

- Ground floor will be converted to a student entertainment center.

LOPES WAY

- Student Union: Einstein Bros Bagels, The Habit Burger, Slices Pizza, Mongolian 360 Grill and salad/soup bar. Qdoba and Mojo Bowl will remain in current locations.
- Camelback and Prescott halls: Chick-fil-A, Subway, Panda Express, Peet's Coffee & Tea, convenience store, GCU team store
- Indoor and outdoor eating areas, open until 1 a.m., in urban community setting

OFFICE BUILDING

- Four-story structure, scheduled to open in 2016 in a central location, tentatively will house Administration, Spiritual Life, Student Engagement, Residence Life, Career Services and Athletics.

SOCCER STADIUM

- Berm seating 2,500 to open by first game in September
- Stadium seating 3,000 to open by end of year



Meet the men behind the mortar in a campus construction video at news.gcu.edu.



A construction worker eyes the beams in the engineering building.

LOPES WAY

The first stop on the GCU monorail is Lopes Way. Gone will be the all-you-can-eat cafeteria in the Student Union, replaced by a food court with three restaurants — Einstein Bros Bagels, The Habit Burger Grill and Slices Pizza — plus the soup-and-salad bar and Mongolian 360 Grill that are part of the cafeteria. Qdoba and Mojo Bowl will remain in their current locations on the west side of the building.

What now are offices on the first floor of Prescott and Camelback halls will be filled with food options instead. Chick-fil-A and Subway will move from the ground floor of Thunder Alley and will be joined by Panda Express, Peet's Coffee & Tea, and a grocery store with grab-and-go salads, sandwiches and pastas. The GCU merchandise store also will be added to that location.

Mueller envisions a warm, feel-good atmosphere that will be open until 1 a.m. and will be a destination for visitors as well as campus residents. For example, fans attending basketball games, concerts, theatre productions and other events will have places to eat before or after the occasion.

Cody Dumas, president of Associated

Students of GCU, said students rated food their top priority in an ASGCU survey taken at its first meeting last fall. And it's usually the conversation topic when a student wants to meet with Dumas one-on-one. The move away from a buffet-style cafeteria toward more choices plus the continued use of food trucks suits their collective palate.

"They like the idea of just more variety," he said. "You look at other universities, and more are switching over to that food-court style. It will provide more options, which is what the students want, and they seem to be pretty excited about it."

One of those options is the ability to sit together no matter who eats what. Under the current setup, anyone who wants to sit in the cafeteria has to pay to get in there. Now everyone will be able to eat whatever they want and sit wherever they want.

"Students are used to food courts. They're used to brands," Griffin said. "Even though you can have six sandwiches for the price of one at an all-you-can-eat place, they'd rather buy one sandwich at Subway because they know Subway — they're so brand-conscious."

THE GROVE

Monorail Stop 2 is The Grove. It doesn't take much prompting to get people talking excitedly about the new housing for 3,410 freshmen.

"They're the best dorms I've seen out of any college I visited," said incoming freshman Shelby Langston of Chandler, who plans to study mechanical engineering. She's destined for Acacia Hall after choosing GCU over Arizona State University, the University of Arizona and a private Christian university.

Brandon Clarke said he and other resident directors got a good chuckle when one student told him, "They are building what I can only assume are super dorms."

"I'm super excited about the culture we'll be able to build there," said Jesi Weeks, who will be a resident director in Willow Hall.

But the really super thing, Griffin said, is the idea of pairing freshmen in the same major, if they so desire, and helping them get acclimated quickly. In addition to Student Affairs and Academic Affairs offices, Juniper Hall also will house "Living Learning Communities" for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and honors students.

"We want to provide a better experience, higher involvement and personal and professional development in the areas of academics, social life and spiritual life," said Zach Mikutowicz, program/process manager for institutional effectiveness.

Matt Hopkins, director of Residence Life, said the expansion process has been an opportunity for rethinking old ways of doing things.

"As the University grows, we have to look at scaling it to the number of students," Hopkins said. "We don't want it to be a mile wide and an inch deep. We see our role as more than just providing a place to sleep. We also see ourselves as educators."

There's another aspect to The Grove that will change campus life for everyone, not just freshmen: Dropping 3,410 students into a previously uninhabited corner of campus will act like a counterweight on a scale.

"It's really going to tip the atmosphere," Griffin said. "It's going to be on the opposite side of the campus from where our current residential space is, and that is going to balance out the foot traffic."



ENGINEERING BUILDING

Stop 3 on our tour takes us across campus. This project, which consists of two four-story structures connected by elevators and stairs, was started earlier than any of the others. It had to be because, unlike The Grove, it's more complicated with eight laboratories for students enrolled in new electrical, mechanical and biomedical engineering degree programs this fall. There's also going to be a music recording studio for the College of Theology's Center for Worship Arts.



THUNDER ALLEY

Our next stop is the building with the Big Top-looking roof, Thunder Alley. The ground floor will be converted to a place where students can gather to eat and relax. That makes perfect sense because the basement, Thunderground, is a popular student hangout with ping-pong tables, billiards and a bowling alley.



OFFICE BUILDING

The fifth stop on our tour: a four-story building that will be built in a central location on campus. The tentative plan is to put offices for the Administration, Student Affairs, Spiritual Life, Career Services, the Health and Wellness Center and Athletics in that building.

SOCCER STADIUM

GCU's monorail doesn't have far to go for Stop 6. When Schellas Hyndman was hired as GCU's new men's soccer coach in January, Mueller said he wanted the sport to become a basketball-like centerpiece for the fall athletics schedule. In the middle of that mission is the new stadium, which will run north-south where the artificial turf Mariposa Field currently sits in front of Antelope Gym and Kaibab.

That means that the two buildings directly to the south, the bookstore and the old Building 9 that has served many temporary purposes, will be leveled to create enough space. The 3,000-seat stadium seating won't be ready in time for the season opener in September, but the field and grass berm that can accommodate 2,500 fans are expected to be in place.

The stadium, which will face east to protect fans from the afternoon or early evening sun, will house six classrooms that can become team rooms during games. It is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.



Grand Canyon University Hotel

OFF CAMPUS

The list of significant changes doesn't end at 3300 W. Camelback Road. Also scheduled to be open this fall are two nearby facilities that have been brought under the GCU umbrella with the idea of upgrading them into the centerpieces of new programs in the Colangelo College of Business. Maryvale Golf Course will be the hub of the golf course management curriculum, and Grand Canyon University Hotel and a conference center at Camelback Road and 27th Avenue will employ and teach students in hospitality management.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Dumas, a junior, marvels at how much has happened in just three years.

"It's funny because there are times I don't even recognize the campus," he said.

His attitude reflects that of his student constituency. This is Topic A in campus conversations, and the sense of anticipation only figures to build this summer as The Grove gets its finishing touches and Lopes Way starts to take shape.

"I talk with students from all over campus every day, and I think students are pretty excited," Dumas said.

So does Griffin.

"I just love to walk across campus. I park as far away from my office as I can, and it's on purpose," he said. "For one, I love to walk. But also, if I'm parking in my private parking space, I'm missing a huge opportunity to interact with students."

With all that extra foot traffic this fall, he'll get even more opportunities, starting with a Move-In that will be stretched to five days from three. GCU's Tomorrowland is almost here, and the fireworks have just begun. **G**



Flatz sisters have
doubled their impact on
performing arts program

Twingenuity

BY COOPER NELSON

Twins Claire and Joy Flatz are identical in appearance, but their interests, personalities and individual contributions to Grand Canyon University's theatre program are distinctive.

The 22-year-old senior theatre majors burst onto the College of Fine Arts and Production scene by playing the lead roles in the "The Boy Friend" as freshmen and performing in 23 combined productions, often as leading ladies. Their costumes might as well hang from the ceiling of GCU's Ethington Theatre, like retired jerseys in a sports arena, to commemorate their dazzling performances over four years.

Notably, Joy played Cinderella in "Into the Woods," the daughter of Capulet in "Romeo and Juliet" and Irene Adler in "Sherlock Holmes." Claire played the baker's wife in "Into the Woods" and the lead female role, Belle, in "A Christmas Carol."

The freedom to perform as freshmen allowed them to find their individual strengths in film and theatre.

"There is inherently a safety net that comes with performing at college and failing, which has allowed us to grow," Joy said.

Said Claire, "Being able to perform as freshmen helped us gain confidence to pursue opportunities outside campus."

Their impressive resumés extend beyond Ethington.

Claire, who performed in fewer GCU productions to seek professional theatre roles, was cast in Phoenix Theatre's "Mary Poppins" in 2014 and this year's "Anything Goes" and was the lead in "Footloose" at Christian Community and Youth Theater in Portland, Ore. Joy pursued television, which allowed her to perform more at GCU because it doesn't take up as much time. She appeared in the pilot of NBC's drama "Grimm," acted in a national PetSmart commercial and played the lead in the Biblical Web series "Leviathan."

Theatre major Joshua Vanderpoel might know the twins better than

Graduating seniors Joy (left) and Claire Flatz learned to be confident, strong performers during their four years in the College of Fine Arts and Production. PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

anyone in Ethington. The 21-year-old senior has performed in 11 theatre productions, including 10 with the Flatzes, and said their work ethic inspires COFAP students.

"Separately, they have done almost more than the entire program combined in terms of performing at Ethington and on a national stage, but when you put them together, they leave everyone else in the dust," Vanderpoel said.

"They've definitely set a standard for the professionalism of the program, and I think that will linger for a while because of what they have imparted on other actors."

Students in the spotlight

Student performers like the Flatzes have helped elevate GCU's profile among collegiate theatres in Arizona. Claude Pensis, dean of COFAP, assistant dean Bill Symington and theatre instructor Michael Kary deserve the most credit, but students have paved the way.

Unlike many universities, which often cast graduate students in lead roles, GCU underclassmen receive the opportunity in their first year. Casting newcomers has been inevitable for a program that was reinstated just five years ago after a four-year closure.

Pensis designed the program to prepare students for professional work as upperclassmen. With faculty guidance, students also have created additional opportunities for Ethington's growing talent pool, such as a student improvisational comedy team and the Canyon Night Live sketch-comedy show. Other students have helped GCU's Second

Series of smaller, off-Ethington shows, where all aspects of production are handled by students.

They are earning professional work, too. Senior Ryan Usher was in a national cable commercial, and Vanderpoel acted in a national PetSmart commercial. Senior William Wyss directed and performed at Phoenix Theatre, while junior Kelsey Hillman was a stage manager at Valley Youth Theatre.

Pensis credits Ethington's rapid maturity to the leadership of the program's 65 seniors, COFAP's second graduating class since 2010.

"Claire and Joy and other seniors are, to an extent, pioneers of our success," Pensis said. "Our upperclassmen have taken it upon themselves to make the productions the best they can be, and the twins really have spearheaded that.

"They have done what you want your students to do — perform at the highest level. It is absolutely great for them, but it is also highly valuable for the program."

It's a twin thing

The twins began singing and dancing at age 3 in Ridgefield, Wash. They started acting in high school and made a mature decision as sophomores.

"Before we got an agent, we sat down together and decided that if we are going to compete for roles, we have to be each other's biggest fan and cheerleader," Joy said.

They often audition back-to-back to support each other and stand out among the competition. They usually get grouped as "the twins," with one cast over the other, but if they're going to be each other's competition, they'd also prefer to be the other's support.

"We often are up for the same roles because we look the same," said Claire. "We're happy for whichever gets a role, and I think our castings

have helped us figure out that one is more specialized in film and the other in theatre."

As juniors, their pact was tested during auditions for "Into the Woods." Both auditioned for the role of Cinderella, and Joy was chosen while Claire was cast as the baker's wife. Rita Flatz, the twins' mother, said Claire was heartbroken by the casting but supported her sister. Rita and her husband, Ron, a pilot, fly to Phoenix to watch all of their daughters' productions.

"Claire is more of that girl next door and Joy was always a cheerleader, and that's what they've played," Rita said. "Claude and Michael have done a great job casting them in roles that utilize their strengths and allowed them to grow individually. I don't think they would be where they are if they were cast differently."

Exit stage left

In April, the twins will graduate and plan to part for the first time. Joy hopes to find commercial and film work, while Claire plans to join a national theatre company. Their legacies as top Ethington performers will live on, but Claire and Joy are most thankful for the training they've received as students.

Pensis said moving on from the twins will be tough, but they have left an impact on future generations.

"They're really fine actors, but more importantly they're really fine people," he said. "They've made a lasting impression and will be greatly missed." 



Watch a video on COFAP's Improv, Second Series and Canyon Night Live at news.gcu.edu.

Roll the Credits



The Flatz twins performed in 23 combined Ethington Theatre productions during their time at GCU, often as leading ladies. PHOTOS BY DARRYL WEBB

Joy

NBC's "Grimm" (pilot)
"Much Ado About Nothing"
"Romeo and Juliet"

National PetSmart commercial, "Pepper"
"Leviathan" Web series
"Oklahoma!"

Together

"A Midsummer Night's Dream"
"The Boy Friend"
"Dracula"

"A Christmas Carol"
"The Cherry Orchard"
"H.M.S. Pinafore"
"Into the Woods"

"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"
"Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure"

Claire

Broadway Rose Theatre Company's
production of "My Fair Lady"
Christian Community and Youth Theater's
production of "Footloose"

"Ah, Wilderness!"
Phoenix Theatre's production of
"Mary Poppins"

Phoenix Theatre's production of
"Anything Goes"





Higher Calling

Working on doctorate is one more way CEO of youth homes fulfills his lofty goals

BY RICK VACEK

A day in the life of Tom Granado starts like a space launch — early and with a burst of energy that takes it to new heights.

He and his wife, Wynn, get up at 4:30 a.m. and pray for a half-hour before she goes to work and he goes to work out. A few hours later, when the founder and CEO of New Horizon Youth Homes arrives in his Tempe, Ariz., office, his staff members say it's impossible not to know he's there, such is his considerable presence. They talk fondly about his "Tomisms," about the way he gets excited about new ideas in staff meetings, and about how the family atmosphere he has created makes it like no other job they've had.

It takes passion and unflagging enthusiasm to run 14 Valley locations that provide residential and outpatient services to at-risk children, teens and adults. It takes an incredible work ethic to

do all that while completing his doctorate at Grand Canyon University.

It takes someone like Tom Granado.

"Our role model is our CEO," said Jason Kindred, program director of New Horizons.

"What I like," added administrative director Mindy Leon, "is that we're given so much by Tom, but if we have an idea, we're able to go to Tom and he'll usually say, 'Try it.'"

Prayers answered

Granado's decision to pursue a doctorate came after a time in his life when he wasn't feeling so great. While going through a divorce, he also was trying to figure out the next steps for New Horizon, which he established in 2001.

"I got lost for a year or two, but God used it to get my attention," he said. "When I recommitted myself to God, things started going well. I dedicated the agency to God, and

that's what led me to GCU."

Granado heard about the University on the radio and had seen it on billboards, so he applied. He remembers the exact time — 5:45 p.m. on a Friday — in the spring of 2013 when he got a call from a GCU enrollment counselor asking, "Are you ready to start your doctorate?"

And so it was that a man with so much on his plate added a full helping of work on a doctor of education in organizational leadership with an emphasis in organizational development.

"I had just been praying, asking God, 'What's next?'" he said. "I said to God, 'I'll do the homework, but you've got to help me run this agency.'"

"I understand why God sent me back — because we needed to evolve. We're doing this based on what I've learned at GCU. It's exactly what I needed — to look at things in a new way."

Tom Granado is the founder and CEO of Tempe-based New Horizon Youth Homes, which provides residential and outpatient services to at-risk children, teens and adults.

PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

Granado, 47, met Wynn, who like him has three children, and they were married last June. On the job, he delegated to his program directors to give himself time to do the course work, which varies from five to 20 hours a week, and on his dissertation, “The Influence of Spirituality in a Human Service Agency and its Influence on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors.”

Watching Granado interact with a group of boys in one of New Horizon’s five Chandler, Ariz., homes is like a behavioral study — of both him and his young protégés. He is such a natural leader, asking pertinent questions with a warm, fatherly tone, and the boys are open and talkative.

Clinical Director AMee Vermeire remembers being struck by Granado’s confidence the first time she saw him in that environment, talking with the boys as easily as he played flag football with them.

“The way he speaks to people, it’s not arrogant, it’s just a level of confidence,” she said. “I thought, ‘How can I get to that?’”

Granado said New Horizon’s success rate, which is defined by a client graduating or making a transition to a home or a lower level of care, is about 60 percent, and he estimates that his agency has helped 1,500 clients. One of them is 19-year-old Jose Mendiola, who came to NHYH three years ago. He considers Granado “one of the coolest dudes ever” and said the agency has meant “everything” to him.

“Before New Horizon, I had nothing,” he said. “I didn’t feel like I had a father. I didn’t feel like I had a family. I didn’t have an education. They gave me a set of tools that I can utilize to solve problems. They understood me.”

Old-fashioned values

Granado’s rules are what he calls a “direct approach with old-fashioned values” — no piercings or clothing related to alcohol, drugs or gangs, and a focus on accomplishments, rewarding positive behavior and correcting negative actions. But within the care and discipline there is room for improvement and growth.

“We don’t bring in kids who don’t want to come,” Granado said. “We’re not over-controlling. We want them to be willing to change.”

Said Kindred, “What we’re really big on is we let the kids make choices because we expect them to make mistakes.”

Mendiola said he made his share when he first got to the home, but now he’s working at Home Depot and considers himself one of his home’s leaders.

“The program works,” he said. “I feel like I’m a testimonial to that. I don’t have any negative impulses anymore. That’s gone.”

Mendiola hopes to go into the Marines, and his career goal is to work in behavioral health, preferably at New Horizon. He would be following in the footsteps of Granado, who joined the Marines when he was 17 because he wanted to escape his friends’ party lifestyle.

As a corporal who taught good habits to young Marines, he realized that he wanted to teach boys and men those same skills.

“Everybody is going to encounter difficulties,” Granado said. “God has a purpose for each one of us, and He has blessed us with the ability to achieve that purpose. We need to lean on Him when we’re feeling down or overwhelmed. We’re not doing what He wants if we don’t keep trying.”

His work ethic certainly is a testament to that as he perseveres through his doctorate with a goal of finishing up by next year. But being part of GCU has given him satisfaction, too.

“It makes me feel at home even though I’m not a 21-year-old bachelor’s student living on campus,” Granado said. “I still feel connected.”

This is one rocket ship that has its mission very much in control.

BY THE NUMBERS

NEW HORIZON YOUTH HOMES

1,500
clients served
and discharged



175 outpatient clients

60 residential clients

120 employees



2 adult residential facilities coming soon



6 homes
for boys



2 homes
for girls



1

number of clients
when New Horizon
was started in 2001

3

outpatient
care
locations

SOURCE: WWW.NHYH.ORG

Special Delivery

They prayed for a baby and got the most beloved male call they could imagine

BY JANIE MAGRUDER

Jesse Hannington Nedella is a cherubic blond bundle of busyness. He zips through his living room in Avondale, Ariz., alternately lobbing a fluffy ball at his dad's head and fitting plastic triangles into a puzzle box. He stops just long enough to bounce on toddler legs to an Elmo song on TV's "Sesame Street," then pops a plastic bucket onto his head and continues to entertain.

Jesse is 20 months old and even knows how to whistle. By all accounts, he is the definition of a miracle.

The uniting of brainpower

Looking back, their meeting at Grand Canyon University feels accidental. But Drs. Nicole (Stevenson) and Brent Nedella, now 34, have realized their relationship — which began awkwardly in organic chemistry class — and their entire lives are being orchestrated quite beautifully by God.

Brent figured out at 13 that he wanted to be a doctor, and GCU made his undergraduate education possible with a scholarship. Nicole decided in kindergarten that she would be a veterinarian, came to GCU because of its cadaver lab (as so many high school students do) and switched to people medicine as a junior after enjoying her human dissection class.

The two biology majors were extremely shy and never spoke during their freshman lab despite sitting next to each other.

"God just totally brought this guy into my life, when my plan was to go to grad school and meet someone later," Nicole said.

With medical school and residency looming, Brent had no room in his schedule for a girlfriend. "I figured once I was a big important doctor, I would meet my trophy wife," he said.

"Sorry, you got a nerd," Nicole laughed.

They dated for two years, graduated in 2002 and started medical school at Midwestern University in Glendale, Ariz. They married on Nov. 17, 2003, then supported and studied with each other during seven years of tough courses and residencies.



Jesse Nedella's rosy, kissable cheeks are impossible for his parents, Nicole and Brent, to resist.

PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB

God directed them away from pediatrics (her) and orthopedics (him) toward family practice and made room for them in 2010 at Pinnacle Family Medicine in Litchfield Park, Ariz. The new practice, started by GCU alumnus Dr. David Engstrom, was bursting at the seams. Engstrom had been given funds from Banner Health to hire one more doctor to serve the expanding West Valley population.

"Dave started it on a foundation of God and was fully seeking Him when he made the decision to bring on another provider," Brent said. "And then God brought him two."

A mission to Africa

The Nedellas wanted to be parents and tried to conceive for six years before consulting a fertility specialist in 2011. But they had reservations about putting "20 embryos on ice" that likely would never all be used. Ultimately,

Nicole prayed for God's will and converted the nursery in their home to a "surrender" room where she studied the Bible every day.

"It was a turning point for me — 'If I don't get pregnant, that's OK,'" she said.

That spring, a friend of Engstrom who ran a nonprofit doing work in Uganda said God had told him in a dream that the Engstroms and Nedellas would accompany him on a medical mission trip to Africa. This was news to Engstrom, who'd never been to Africa, and to the Nedellas, too.

Brent and Nicole prayed, and after listening to Britt Nicole's song, "Seeing for the First Time" (How many years did You plan this moment here? To show me how You love me?), they felt called to go.

For 10 days in June 2012, the 12 Americans traveled throughout western Uganda, flying by what felt like the seat of their pants, handing

out medication, healing what they could and praying for what they could not.

The team worked with Ugandan missionary Hannington Bahemuka, whose ideas for the recovery of his war-torn homeland were outsized only by his heart for its people. He inspired other Ugandans to dig deep, telling them that God had given them everything they needed to rebuild their communities.

"People walked for days to see us, and we saw a thousand patients in less than four days," Brent said. "We used 50 percent of our medications on the first 25 percent of the trip, and Dave said, 'We'll just go loaves and fish' (referring to Jesus' miraculous feeding of the 5,000). We said, 'All right, that sounds amazing. God will take care of it.'"

And He did: "We decided that we were not going to hold back, but treat every person the way they should be treated," Nicole said. "And our very last patient got our very last dose of malaria meds. We had the exact dose we needed."

The doctors left the churches where their makeshift clinics had been established with three large bags containing other medications. Loaves and fish.

On the night before they left Bundibugyo, near Uganda's border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Nedellas shared with the Pinnacle team for the first time their infertility journey. They cried together, and Pastor Derik Hines of Community Church of Joy in Glendale laid his hands on Nicole's stomach.

"I'm not one who's had a lot of healings manifested in my life, but as I began to pray, it went from me asking God to heal her to this really strong sense that God was telling me He was going to give her a baby," Hines said. "God started stirring in me in a powerful way, and I was so scared, but I said to these two doctors, 'I know God is going to give you a baby. He will place in you a baby before the first of the year.' And I'm so thankful that it was actually Him speaking."

Immediately after, the sky opened to a downpour. "And you could just feel God," Nicole said. "There is nothing that will make you feel God more than being helpless in Africa."

Blessings abound at home

If Ugandans could trust God for their wellbeing, the Nedellas could try to trust His plans for them. But it was easier said than done. Once back in Arizona, the couple decided to pursue infertility treatments. A week



GCU alumni and others brought God's word and medical care to western Uganda in October 2014.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICOLE NEDELLA

Medical missions spread the Word

The first time GCU alumnus Dr. David Engstrom went on a medical mission trip, to Thailand in 2006, he viewed it as a cool opportunity and a welcome break from his daunting hospital residency. He returned home and told his wife, Jamie (Reisland) Engstrom, that he wouldn't be going back.

But God had other plans for the Engstroms, who graduated in 1999 from GCU with bachelor's degrees in human biology and now operate a booming West Valley practice, Pinnacle Family Medicine. Over the past nine years, David and Jamie, a physician's assistant, along with other GCU alums, Pinnacle staff and area pastors, have made five more trips to Thailand and have added Uganda and Mexico, too. As a result, an estimated 9,000 people during 16 visits have received God's love and Pinnacle's medical care.

Among those joining the Engstroms on a trip to Bundibugyo, Uganda, in October 2014 were GCU alums Brent and Nicole Nedella (see main story) and Courtney Mitchell and Stephanie Bradley, who earned bachelor's degrees in nursing from GCU in 2011 and 2013, respectively.

Engstrom said nothing brings people in developing countries out of their homes like free medical care.

"Whenever Jesus or the Apostles shared the Gospel, the platform was always healing the sick and proclaiming the kingdom," he said. "When we go on a medical mission, every single patient hears the Gospel. That's the important thing. You can give some medicine for 30 days to cure them from some sickness or pain, but saving souls and leading people to Christ, that's the reason to do it."



To see a slideshow of the Pinnacle team's 2014 trip to Uganda, visit news.gcu.edu.

before they were to begin, four days before the end of the year, Nicole learned she was pregnant.

The pregnancy was rough, plagued by pain and bleeding, and after going into labor at 26 weeks, Nicole was hospitalized and put on bed rest. With many prayers, the Nedellas' long-desired blessing was born healthy on Aug. 15, 2013.

Jesse, whose name in Hebrew means "gift from God," loves the two big beige dogs in his backyard, babbling his secret language to strangers and climbing onto his mom's lap for reassuring nuzzles. He arrived in his Father's time, and he was worth the wait.

"Jesse is my walking miracle," Nicole said.



Learn how the hand of God is guiding the Nedellas in their medicine, mission work and family life in a video at www.gcu.edu/alumni.

#aheadofthegame

Skills learned at GCU helped Speers' social media business prosper

Natalie Speers, founder of Social Ally, a social media and branding agency based in Scottsdale, Ariz., has long been an early adapter. As Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were reshaping human connections, she was helping shape social media as a communication tool for clients.

When she first started out, Speers worked for an event and entertainment company, promoting events in the Phoenix area and getting paid based on the number of people in attendance.

At the time, Myspace was popular. Speers took advantage of marketing to its large audience by building a database. She taught herself HTML code and created a promotional Myspace page where people could RSVP for the events, then get in for free.

At those events, Speers invited paying guests to sign up through Myspace for future events in exchange for providing their contact information. She added the phone numbers and email addresses to her database and eventually developed a list of more than 10 million people, she said. Speers' boss noticed her efforts and created a department for her called "New Media."

The Grand Canyon University alumna then launched a social media business with clients that included high-end restaurants and nightclubs in New York City, Chicago, Atlanta, Las Vegas and Scottsdale and in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Business was booming, until her mother became ill.

"I was so focused on taking care of my mom that our company began to fall apart," said Speers, who earned her bachelor's degree in marketing in 2014.

Speers took a year off after her mother's passing to grieve and refocus. She emerged with a clear head, the will to start her own business and a great idea with growth potential. She lacked a business plan, but she was enrolled in a business class at GCU that taught her to develop the framework for Social Ally.

"GCU served as the foundation and catalyst I needed to build and maintain my agency," said Speers, now 28. "Having learned marketing principles, strategic management, advertising and public relations, I now have the ability to live prosperously in my purpose of helping other entrepreneurs share their messages and services. I am beyond grateful for the staff and peers I had the privilege of learning from and alongside."

Today, Social Ally (socialallyusa.com) has become so popular that Speers has potential clients on a waiting list. But she still finds time to help nonprofits and small businesses that can't afford social media and branding services to "prosper in their passion." She also is launching a new site, Social Natalie, which will offer small businesses and social media professionals free advice related to the latest industry trends. — PAIGE GRUNER, ALUMNI RELATIONS



Watch a video about GCU's role in helping Speers become an entrepreneur at www.gcu.edu/classnotes.



PHOTO BY PAIGE GRUNER



Class Notes 1997 to 2014



What's new with you? Send your class notes and a high-resolution photo to www.gcu.edu/classnotes.

1990s



Holly Kain, B.A. in History, '97, was a semifinalist for the 2015 Arizona Teacher of the Year.

Kain was named one of the state's top five teachers by the Arizona Educational Council. She teaches advanced placement courses in human geography at Hamilton High in Chandler.



Jim Zieler, B.S. in Public Safety Administration, '02, recently was appointed

to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and works at Salt River Project. Zieler had a 20-year career in law enforcement, retiring as chief of the St. Johns (Ariz.) Police Department, and remains active in the community.



Robert DeCou, M.Ed. in Secondary Education, '09, and MBA and M.S. in Leadership,

'12, is executive producer and co-owner of the Los Angeles-based startup, Lux Virtual, which creates 3-D visuals to showcase clients' products, services and technologies. DeCou's goal is to create a company culture based on creativity and growth.



Eric Griffin, M.S. in Leadership with an Emphasis in Disaster Preparedness and

Executive Fire Leadership, '10, is the new chief of Greenville (N.C.) Fire-Rescue. Griffin, an interim chief since 2013, has more than 20 years of experience in the fire service.



Ronald Gaschler, BBA in Marketing, '99, is associate director of career services at the

University of Arizona in Tucson. Gaschler is involved in various educational organizations and is an executive board member of the Escondido Education COMPACT.



David Martin, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction: Technology, '07, joined Piedmont

Technical College in Greenwood, S.C., as program director and instructor of funeral service education. Martin's goal is for the program to become the premier training facility for funeral directors in the Southeast.



Robert Libberton, MBA with an Emphasis in Leadership, '09, is CEO of La Paz

Regional Hospital in Parker, Ariz. Libberton has more than 20 years of administrative experience and most recently was administrator of the Professional Services Group at Yuma Regional Medical Center.



Susan Thompson, B.A. in Communications, '10, is an editor at Global Awakening,

a Christian missions organization based in Mechanicsburg, Pa. Thompson co-authored "Healing Energy: Whose Energy Is it?" and "The Children's Bread: Restoring the Ministry of Deliverance to the Church in the 21st Century" with Global Awakening's founder, Dr. Randy Clark.

2000s



Gabe Cooper, BBA in Business Administration, '02, and MBA with an Emphasis

in Leadership, '10, is an engineering manager of analysis and testing at PING Golf. Cooper also is an operations pastor for Christ's Church of the Valley in Surprise, Ariz.



Andrew Wannemacher, M.Ed. in Elementary Education, '08, is superintendent

of the Aguila (Ariz.) Elementary School District. Wannemacher previously was the district's community learning center grant director and a sixth-grade teacher at Aguila Elementary.



Martha Daniels, M.A. in Teaching, '10, is a 2015 Rodel Exemplary Teacher. Daniels teaches

at Ruth Fisher Elementary in Tonopah, Ariz., and spent the last 10 years as a middle school math teacher. She helped develop the district's math curriculum.



Rebecca Aguirre-Guerra, B.S. in Nursing, '11, is an outpatient wound care registered

nurse at Banner-University Medical Center in Phoenix. Aguirre-Guerra received the Daisy Award, which honors extraordinary nurses with great

SPOTLIGHT ON

Catherine Brubaker, '07



Catherine Brubaker is a two-time traumatic brain-injury survivor who has taken life by the handlebars.

In 2010, Brubaker was assaulted, leaving her with a brain injury that also affected her heart, necessitating a pacemaker. Upon being discharged from the hospital, she was involved in a head-on collision and sustained a second injury to her brain.

Three years after her accident, Brubaker was determined to take her life back. She purchased a recumbent tricycle and met Dan Zimmerman, a stroke survivor who was riding the same model. They realized they were riding for the same purpose — freedom.

Zimmerman gave Brubaker his card, and on the back was a U.S. map with a red line from Anacortes, Wash., to Key West, Fla. Zimmerman was doing a cross-country bike ride to raise hope and awareness about cycling's ability to help brain-injury survivors recover and regain their strength.

Brubaker, of Tempe, Ariz., later called Zimmerman. She said, "I'm in. I want to do this ride." She had six weeks to train and raise \$10,000, which she accomplished with Zimmerman's help and that of the community.

Along with four other cyclists, Brubaker completed the five-month, 5,390-mile ride, "Spokes Fighting Strokes," on Nov. 29, 2014. "That ride changed my life," said the GCU alumna, who has a master's degree in leadership.

The journey inspired Brubaker, 44, in many ways. She started a nonprofit, Hope for Trauma, to raise hope for brain-injury survivors. Her goal is to purchase recumbent tricycles for survivors and teach them to ride safely. — PAIGE GRUNER

TO DONATE OR LEARN MORE about Brubaker's organization, visit hopefortrauma.org or connect with her at [Facebook.com/irideforhope](https://www.facebook.com/irideforhope).

clinical skills, strong patient care and compassion.



William Aligood, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction: Technology, '11, is a fifth-grade

teacher at Plumb Elementary in Clearwater, Fla. Aligood was one of 10 finalists for the 2015 Outstanding Educator of the Year in Pinellas County Schools.



Christine Grabar, B.S. in Applied Management, '11, wrote a book, "The Romantic Cat Lady,"

the story of a single woman who moves with her two cats from Phoenix to start a new life in North Carolina.



Jessica Richardson, M.Ed. in Education Administration, '11, is principal of Ocean

Palms Elementary in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., and a new member of the board of directors of the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach. Richardson is a former assistant principal at Cunningham Creek Elementary in St. Johns, Fla.



Sylvia Miller, M.Ed. in Education Administration, '12, was named a 2015 Rodel Exemplary

Teacher. Miller is a fifth-grade teacher at Western Valley Elementary in Phoenix and has 11 years of teaching experience. She is a site leader for the fifth-grade team and is a member of the Academic Parent Teacher Team.



LeAnn Moore, M.S. in Accounting, '12, joined the accounting staff at

Swindoll, Janzen, Hawk & Loyd, LLC, in McPherson, Kan. Before joining SJHL, Moore worked in accounting at Central Christian College of Kansas in McPherson.



Trish Anderson, M.Ed. in Educational Administration, '13, is a program

manager of student development and outreach at GCU. Anderson is a former learning coordinator in the Tucson (Ariz.) Unified School District. She is working on a doctorate in educational leadership at GCU.



Margot Brisky, B.S. in Psychology, '13, has started a life coaching practice called discoverHer,

a faith-based organization that offers girls and young women from ages 8 to 18 the opportunity to develop their personal and spiritual identities.



Emmanuella Charles, M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education, '13, founder of Little

Charlie's Academy, a Philadelphia day care center, wrote "The Motherless Child." The memoir is about her childhood in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where she grew up thinking her grandmother was her mother, and how God helped her through the hardships.



Kelly Frey, B.S. in Nursing, '13, is a nurse specializing in medical and surgical nursing

and palliative care at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee, Ill. The Worldwide Leaders in Healthcare and the International Nurses Association recently

honored Frey for her successes in nursing. She is pursuing a master's in nursing at GCU.



Latiecea Hailey-Brown, M.Ed. in Educational Administration, '13, is an assistant

principal of Mort Elementary School in Tampa, Fla. Hailey-Brown previously worked at the Future Leaders Academy, which prepares future leaders for administrative positions.



Ethan Holmes, M.S. in Leadership with an Emphasis in Disaster Preparedness

and Executive Fire Leadership, '13, was promoted to career fire captain in the Wyomissing (Pa.) Fire Department. Holmes was named Firefighter of the Year in 2007 by his department and also received the Berks County American Red Cross Heroism Award for assisting in rescuing a wounded firefighter.



Nikki Rettelle, B.S. in Entrepreneurial Studies, '13, who is passionate

about advocating for cyber abuse and stalking victims, is a paralegal and office manager for a San Diego law firm. Rettelle is a committee chair and director of the San Diego Paralegal Association's board of directors.



Holly Simpson, B.A. in History, '13, published her first book, "Cyrus Persian," about a nobleman

who goes to war, becomes a slave and turns into a vampire. Simpson is currently writing the second book in the series.



Barbara Brown-White, B.S. in Early Childhood Education, '14, published her

memoir, "If Only You Knew: (My Story)," which describes how God has inspired her life. Brown-White lives in Angleton, Texas, where she works with dyslexic students in the Angleton Independent School District.



Darlene Carter, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction: Reading with

an Emphasis in Elementary Education, '14, has been an educator in the Baltimore City Public Schools since 1994, when she began volunteering and substitute teaching. Carter earned an elementary education degree in 2006 and has been a teacher at Calvin M. Rodwell Elementary for eight years.



Jeffrey Dykhuizen, B.A. in Digital Film with an Emphasis in Production, '14, won best director

in GCU's Film Festival for "Zoey," a found-footage style film of a couple's home video for their unborn child. Dykhuizen is co-founder of Act IV Motion Pictures in Phoenix and a videographer at the East Valley Tribune and 1013 Communications.



Andrew Molosky, Executive MBA, '14, is chief operating officer at UnityPoint at Home, the home

health care division of UnityPoint Health, based in Des Moines, Iowa. Molosky oversees home care operations and provides leadership development.



Tina Mansinghani, MBA, '14, is coordinator of analytics, team business services,

for the American Hockey League. Mansinghani formerly worked for the Central Hockey League, Arizona Cardinals and Phoenix Coyotes.



Christian Neiman, B.S. in Elementary Education and Special Education, '14, was nominated

for Rookie Teacher of the Year in the Deer Valley Unified School District in Phoenix. This is Neiman's first year teaching special education students at Park Meadows Elementary.



Samantha Newhall-Brown, B.A. in Dance Education, '14, is the new dance director at Trevor

Browne High in Phoenix. By implementing the management and communication skills she learned at GCU, Brown gives her students an outlet through which they can express themselves.



Elizabeth Nielsen, B.S. in Nursing, '14, is director of maternity services at TriStar StoneCrest

Medical Center in Smyrna, Tenn. Nielsen has more than 26 years of experience and previously was director of maternal child health at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Reading, Pa.



Sedaya Northern, B.S. in Psychology, '14, is a behavioral health specialist for The New

Foundation, a Scottsdale, Ariz., nonprofit. Northern works with adolescents who were abused,

neglected and/or suffered from addiction. She plans to pursue a master's in professional counseling at GCU.



Lance Rao, B.S. in Business Management, '14, is a financial representative at

Northwestern Mutual, where he interned while at GCU. Rao develops strategic plans for clients to increase their long-term financial security.



Rebecca Roe, B.S. in Nursing, '14, is a clinical development specialist at Northside Hospital-

Forsyth in Cumming, Ga., where she educates staff in the surgical services department. Roe has a passion for improving health literacy for surgical patients and is affiliated with the Georgia Alliance for Health Literacy.



Nick Rubino, B.S. in Forensic Science, '14, the first graduate of GCU's new forensic

science program, is a forensic biologist at the Phoenix Police Department. Rubino screens evidence and prepares samples for DNA analysts.



Dr. Judith Williams, M.S. in Nursing with an Emphasis in Public Health, '14, is an assistant

professor in the nursing department at Marywood University in Scranton, Pa. Williams has been a registered nurse for more than 38 years and provides bedside nursing at local health care facilities.

Parting Shot





Mr. GCU Fun-fetti

Mr. GCU is a popular event on campus, and the 13th annual male pageant provided the usual laughs for the Arena crowd. To get the evening off to a high-flying start, the competitors donned tuxedos and performed a dance number on stage that included shooting confetti into the air.

PHOTO BY DARRYL WEBB



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