



FIFTH THIRD BANK

presents

Tribute!

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

2012

awards celebration

agenda

November 6, 2012

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

DeVos Place

Welcome

Ingrid Jensen

President, YWCA Board of Directors

Carla Blinkhorn

CEO, YWCA West Central Michigan

Mary Tuuk

President, Fifth Third Bank Western Michigan

Mary Gill-Thornton

Co-Chair, YWCA TRIBUTE! Awards Planning Committee

Member, YWCA Board of Directors

Stan Greene

Honorary Co-Chair, YWCA TRIBUTE! Awards Planning Committee

Secretary, YWCA Board of Directors

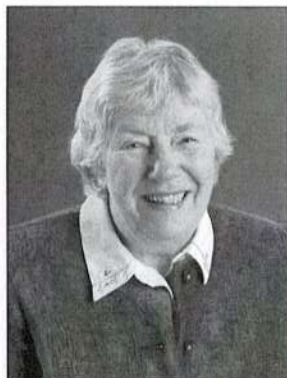
Luncheon

Awards Presentation

Stan Greene

Mary Gill-Thornton

Thank you for attending!



Mary Seeger

*Dean and Professor Emerita
Academic Resources and Special
Programs*

Grand Valley State University

Nominated by Sue Stauffacher

Mary Seeger joined Grand Valley College in 1965 as a German professor. Despite being one of the few female faculty members at the recently formed college, she soon earned a variety of leadership positions, becoming the first chair of the All-College Senate, the first coordinator of the Honors Program, and the first head of the Graduate Program in Education. Along the way, Mary mentored many of Grand Valley's current academic administrators and helped create an environment where an impressive 50 percent of leadership roles are filled by women. Mary retired as Dean of Academic Resources and Special Programs, but is sometimes drawn back to the classroom to teach a German or detective fiction class.

Mary has consistently promoted education and gender equity issues in a wide range of organizations and activities. At GVSU, she chaired the Women's Climate Study in the mid-1990s, and the committee's results changed the university in significant ways that are still felt today. This included the addition of an on-site day care center and a university women's commission that addressed salary equity issues. The study also resulted in more sensitive and effective ways of dealing with sexual harassment and gay and lesbian issues.

As Dean of Academic Resources and Special Programs, she oversaw TRiO, a federally-funded program

that specifically targets individuals with financial difficulties or who are first-generation college students. She also oversaw programs that provided services for students with disabilities. Mary created the Faculty Staff Campaign in 1983 to develop scholarship and program support for students, and she remains active with the campaign today. Her promotion of it raised well over three million dollars over the last decade with 50 percent staff participation, well above the national average for public universities.

Mary has held numerous local and national leadership positions, including board member of the Women's Resource Center, the Association for University Women, the Swedish Council, Equity for Female Athletes Advisory Board, the Society for German-American Studies and the Girl Scouts of the USA. Mary also served as the president of the Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council.

She has been a member of the Girl Scouts of the USA since 1947. She has been a volunteer for over 50 years—a camp counselor, a troop leader, director of international travel programs, international researcher, committee member, and board president. Her volunteerism was honored in 1999 with the highest award an adult can earn—the Girl Scout Thanks badge.

Mary received the lifetime achievement award from GVSU's Women's Commission, as well as the Arend D. Lubbers Award. She is a lifetime member of Phi Beta Kappa and has a Ph.D. in German philology. She has earned both a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and Fulbright Scholarship.



Elaine Dalcher

*Artist, Educator, Co-Creator of
Tanglefoot Studios*

Nominated by Susan Mason

Elaine Dalcher is a Grand Rapids artist and educator whose paintings are included in public and private collections throughout West Michigan, the country, and the world. As an art teacher, Elaine's primary focus has been providing opportunities for creative expression for students who are marginalized and vulnerable. Her career with the Grand Rapids Public Schools began in 1976, teaching art as therapy to students with disabilities and visual impairments at the Association for the Blind, Easter Seals, and St. Mary's Dialysis Unit. At Lexington School, she taught art to adult students to help them earn their high school diplomas. She also taught in an alternative 7th-12th grade program, working with young people who had not been successful in traditional school settings.

For more than 10 years, Elaine worked with some of the most developmentally and physically challenged students in Kent County, developing individual education plans to help students meet goals like making eye contact or touching without drawing back. Most recently, she worked on a project with Henry Ford School for Creative Studies, a GVSU charter school in Detroit, helping students enter their work in this year's ArtPrize.

Elaine's teaching career embodies YWCA values, particularly empowerment and promoting dignity for all. As a woman working on her MFA in the 1980s, she fought for the education she deserved—and continues to speak up for those who are marginalized in our society, those that need support to find and express their voices.

An accomplished painter, Elaine is co-founder of Tanglefoot Studios, a warehouse home to many artist studios that has received widespread recognition for popular open studio shows held annually for the past 21 years. She also teaches art classes for adults in her studio, helping many discover for the first time the joy of creative expression.

Thousands of students can attest to the impact of Elaine's teaching. She teaches the history of art to her students so they can feel a part of the tradition, while also encouraging them to find their own way. Their newfound courage, fostered in Elaine's classroom, translates into empowering life skills. She establishes an environment of mutual trust. By demonstrating respect for her students of all ages and abilities, she earns their respect—and great results follow for a lifetime.

business, management, industry and labor



Kathy Crosby

President & CEO

Goodwill Industries of

Greater Grand Rapids

Nominated by Jill Wallace

Kathy Crosby was looking for work in 1980 when a friend told her about Goodwill Industries. She began as an office clerk in Detroit, mentored by her supervisor. She was promoted, eventually becoming Vice President of Workforce Management at Goodwill Detroit, then Senior Director of Consultative Services with Goodwill Industries International in Washington D.C. She returned to Michigan in 2005 as President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids.

Kathy leads a 30.1-million dollar organization that serves eight counties in west and central Michigan. Since 2005, she has opened eight stores and two boutiques, achieved organizational accreditation twice, and instituted tuition reimbursement and paid study time policies for her 800 employees. She holds CEO/staff forums to discuss topics like "Breaking the Glass Ceiling" and maintains an open-door policy for those wanting to give input or seek advice. Kathy managed a federally-funded Welfare to Work program across 83 locations with a 36-month deadline. Coordinating with non-profits, state government officials, and for-profit vendors, Kathy led the project to on-time completion with all objectives met. She also led the acquisition and development of the first LEED-certified Goodwill store in Michigan.

Kathy developed a mentoring program for high-potential employees and serves as a mentor through both the Jandernoa Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program and the Hauenstein Center Mentorship Program.

Kathy sits on the Board of Directors for the Economic Club of Grand Rapids, is a member of Inforum of West Michigan, and actively supports the Michigan Women's Foundation. She serves on the GVSU Health Advisory Board, the Blue Cross Blue Shield's Business Advisory Board, the Women's Advisory Board for Huntington Bank, and Varnum's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council. She has been a campaign speaker for the Heart of West Michigan United Way, and she is developing a Leadership Academy in her role on the board of MARO. She was elected twice to the Board of Education for Holly Area Schools and served on the Community Education Council for 19 years. Kathy is also on the Pastoral Council at Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, where she is an active member.

Kathy won the Athena Award in 2011 from the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce and was named one of the "50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan" by *The Grand Rapids Business Journal*. She holds an Executive MBA from the University of Maryland and an MA in organizational leadership from Siena Heights University. She and her husband, Eugene, have two children and three grandsons.

community service



Senita Lenear

President

Grand Rapids Public Schools
Board of Education

Nominated by Jane Gierzen

Senita Lenear has been connected to the Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS) since she moved to Grand Rapids when she was nine years old. She is a proud Creston High graduate and President of the GRPS School Board. She serves on the school board's Executive and Finance Committee and the City-Board Liaison Committee, and she is also a member of the Student Advancement Foundation.

Under Senita's leadership, the school district engaged more than 1,000 individuals in developing a strategic plan that now serves as a living, working document that feeds the district's Academic Plan. It aligns all talent, resources, and effort around quality teaching and learning. Senita is a vital part of GRPS' efforts to provide education services to underserved populations, such as children from low-income homes, children for whom English is not their first language, and children with special needs. Senita has brought her international travel experience to GRPS' classrooms and strategic plans, preparing students for a competitive global world.

Senita saw a need in the community to support moms of students, too. She established a Greater Grand Rapids chapter of Mocha Moms for mothers of color who have chosen to leave the work force to stay at home with their families. She is also involved with Sunshine Teen Mothers of Preschoolers, where she inspires young women with a message of self-value and love. She volunteers at the Baxter Community Center and the Grand Rapids African American Health Institute. Senita is the founder of "My Body is a Temple," a program that helps teens discover the benefits of sexual abstinence before marriage. She has also served as President of Abundant Life Ministries.

Before her civic role, Senita graduated *summa cum laude* from Cornerstone University. She gained invaluable leadership experience working for Blue Cross Blue Shield / Blue Care Network of Michigan for 14 years, where she eventually became Senior Partner.

As testament to her influence and commitment, City Commissioner Elias Lumpkins says, "Senita has been a strong, positive, and impactful role model for young ladies and men...She will leave an indelible mark upon our community."

professions



Marge Palmerlee

Executive Director

Dégagé Ministries

Nominated by Bridgette Bassford

In her 15 years as Executive Director of Dégagé Ministries, Marge Palmerlee has grown the Heartside organization to unprecedented levels. When the economy is struggling, Dégagé's services are needed more than ever, and today it serves over 500 individuals each day, offering low-cost and free meals, hygiene facilities, and a food pantry. The Resource Office provides one-on-one support to help individuals obtain employment, secure funding for medical care, find housing, and learn about rehabilitation and community resources. Despite the additional demand that today's economy creates, Marge has added new programs and staff positions—all while generating enough income to meet expenses.

Much of Marge's efforts have been focused on serving vulnerable and at-risk women. In 2003, under her leadership, Dégagé opened the Open Door, an overnight center for women in crisis that has since served nearly 2,000 women.

Marge has served on numerous committees and boards throughout the community. She currently serves on the advisory board of Grand Rapids' new Downtown Market. Her past and current groups include the Heartside

Neighborhood Collaboration Project, Heartside Business Association, the Coalition to End Homelessness, Prostitution Roundtable, Street Reach Steering Committee, Reentry Roundtable, and Mental Health Parity. She has participated in the resolution of community and legal disputes, including panhandling and shelter for criminal sex offenders. She served on the census committee and has taken efforts to encourage voting among the homeless and low-income population.

The Grand Rapids Bar Association honored Marge with their Liberty Bell Award this year, which is for non-lawyers or non-profit organizations that contribute to the cause of justice. Last year, Innovative Insurance Advisors created the Marge Palmerlee Community Service Award, and Marge was its first recipient. The award will be given annually to those who exemplify Marge's giving spirit and attitude.

Marge's life is dedicated to being a voice for the homeless and low-income community. Whether it is meeting with donors or bringing in food donations, collaborating with local leaders or talking one-on-one with clients, Marge will humbly take on whatever tasks are needed to help meet the real and critical needs of the community she loves so dearly. Dégagé seeks to "foster dignity and respect," and this is a lifelong value that Marge puts into action daily.

sports, fitness and wellness



Maria Besta

*Manager of Wheelchair
& Adaptive Sports
Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation
Hospital
Nominated by Shelley Mishler*

Maria Besta is deeply passionate about the abilities of people with disabilities. She has been the camp director at Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp since 1998, where she grew the week-long summer program from ten students to 60, with an increasing number coming from out of state. Many of the camp counselors are former campers who return to serve as role models.

As Therapeutic Coordinator with Kentwood Parks and Recreation in the 1990s, Maria started special dances and movie nights for kids with disabilities. She earned the Kentwood Employee of the Year award for her efforts.

For the past nine years, Maria was Director of the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA). During that time, the program doubled the number of sports offered, such as hand-cycling, adult sled hockey, and softball. Participation grew from 150 to 250 adults and children, making it the largest program of its kind in Michigan and one of the largest in the U.S. Under Maria's determined leadership, GRWSA officially became a part of Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital in May 2012.

Today, Maria is the Manager of the Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports Program at Mary Free Bed. She oversees a variety of sports programs, including Bikes for the Rest of Us. Each spring, children who are disabled are given grants for specially outfitted bikes, and Maria has increased the number of therapists and volunteers who serve the 90 children that make the bike wheels spin—some for the first time.

She also trains therapy dogs for Mary Free Bed and coordinates the Dreams and Wings program, which offers children with disabilities or serious illnesses the chance to take a plane ride at 1,500 feet around West Michigan. Maria also helps coordinate the Junior Pacers Wheelchair Basketball team.

Outside of work, Maria mentors married couples who are working their way through the challenges of a new disability. She started a group for women over 40 called "The Next Chapter." This group makes a list of things they've never done before—climb Sleeping Bear Dune, run a 25K race, etc.—and then they do it together.

Maria is a certified recreational therapist and a gourmet Italian chef. She and her husband, Pat, were born the exact same day. They were married 14 years ago at the Grand Rapids Art Museum and have twin boys.

Judy Lloyd Student Leadership Award Scholarship *presented by the YWCA Board of Directors*



Judy Lloyd

September 18, 1945 to June 1, 2005

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

-John Quincy Adams

It was this way with Judy Lloyd as well. Her kindness and extraordinary grasp of the issues facing our community inspired countless people to follow her lead. She was a role model for us all, the most graceful and respected of leaders. Judy led in a quiet, unassuming way as she connected individuals and organizations to the benefit of those most in need. She was a cheerleader and a touchstone, knowing who to bring to the table to get a job done and then devoting herself wholeheartedly to the tasks needed to get there. She touched hearts and strengthened our community at the same time. Judy's passing was met with an outpouring of generosity in her memory, which the YWCA has housed at the Grand Rapids Community Foundation and directed to long-term support of our services—all to create a community supportive of women and their families that Judy loved so much.

Judy's two decades of influence at the YWCA is immeasurable. She participated on the **TRIBUTE!** Steering and Selection Committees and helped establish and grow the YWCA's Circle of Women Celebration (now Open Circle) exponentially. Judy was a member of our Finance Committee, helping manage finite resources to effectively address the

seemingly infinite challenges facing women and girls. She led the YWCA's Board of Directors during some of the organization's most historic moments and helped lay the foundation for fundamental change in the national YWCA. In each moment, with each task, Judy offered those she worked with warm words of encouragement and the practical hands-on help to succeed beyond expectations.

With a corps of volunteers who resemble Judy's dedication and quiet leadership, the YWCA has worked hard over the last century to create an environment that allows women and girls to thrive and lead. The **TRIBUTE! Student Award** is an extension of that. We honor those young women who—while still in high school—have already shown themselves to be gifted, competent models for us all. The connection between these young women and Judy is natural and apparent. It is most appropriate that the Student Leadership Award should bear her name.

Inspired by Judy's life and work, the YWCA Board of Directors chose to establish the Student Leadership Award in her honor. It is designed to offer practical help to this and future student honorees as they work to fulfill their dreams. It is in this way that we recognize Judy and commit ourselves to a future motivated by her values and example.

Carla Blinkhorn,
YWCA CEO

student honoree

and recipient of the ywca's judy lloyd student leadership award scholarship



Lucero Miranda-Hernandez

Senior

Wyoming High School

Nominated by Rachel Humphreys

Lucero Miranda-Hernandez is a top-notch high school senior at Wyoming High School. At the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, she was recently named Student of the Month for her volunteerism and academic achievements.

When Lucero learned she was going to be a mother at age 14, she knew she needed to turn her life around. She showed wisdom beyond her years when she chose to begin applying herself to provide a steady life for her son. She went from skipping classes to dramatically improving her grades. She made a conscious choice to hold her head high—even as others doubted her—and allow her story to inspire others to believe in themselves. Lucero thrives on helping others, and she likes to be a mediator for those in challenging situations, working to understand the underlying issues so everyone can come to a peaceful solution.

Lucero has been actively involved in the Supporting our Leaders (SOL) Youth Program at the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan for several years. She has successfully completed their HIV prevention course, employability skills

development training, and the SOL Summer Learning Academy. Staff at the Hispanic Center often request Lucero as a speaker, knowing her peers not only need a positive influence to look up to, but someone who they can relate to as well. She attends many SOL events and helps out with the Cesar Chavez March each year. Last year, Lucero gave a moving speech to over 200 students at the annual SOL Celebration, sharing about challenges she faced and how the Hispanic Center has impacted and supported her.

Lucero is passionate about competitive soccer, and she is often sporting a jersey and a pair of cleats. She loves the game and plays every Sunday during the season, where she serves as the voice of encouragement on her team.

In the future, Lucero aspires to work in nursing or criminal justice to help those in need. She dreams of a non-profit center for teen moms so they can have somewhere to go for advice and the practical resources they need.

Today, Lucero is balancing a great deal of responsibility with poise and grace. She is working part-time to provide for her son and save up for college while finishing strong in her senior year at Wyoming High. She is choosing a college and parenting her young child who is the light of her life.