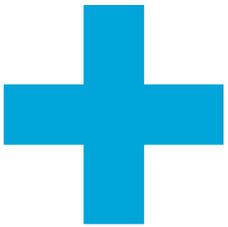


Kalamazoo Valley Community College Alumni

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2014



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Associate of Arts

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Coordinator's Welcome



Hello Kalamazoo Valley alumni and friends! Welcome to the fall 2014 issue of your Alumni+ Newsletter.

The air is crisp, fall semester is underway, and Kalamazoo Valley is growing. The Alumni+ Newsletter is growing too! We plan to expand the newsletter to bring you more alumni news.

With your help, we will fill these pages.

In May, another 569 Kalamazoo Valley students became graduates. The Groves campus also held commencement ceremonies for 42 graduates from four different career academies. Kalamazoo Valley is proud of your accomplishments, be proud of yourselves! Please stay in touch with Alumni+ as you move into the future. E-mail your change of address, news, or Kalamazoo Valley memories to alumni@kvcc.edu.

One of the ways alumni associations recognize their outstanding alumni is through a Distinguished Alumni award. Kalamazoo Valley's Alumni+ Advisory Committee worked many hours setting criteria and reviewing recommendations for that first award in 2013. Alumna NoViolet Bulawayo was named Distinguished Alumni for 2014. A perpetual plaque at the Texas Township campus will honor Kalamazoo Valley's Distinguished Alumni. Is there one you know that has earned this honor? The criteria is in this newsletter on page 7– nominate now!

I have been asked, "Why the + in Alumni+?" Have you wondered about the significance of the plus in Alumni+? As alumni coordinator, I did. As I read through documents that marked the beginning of the Alumni Relations program at Kalamazoo Valley, I discovered the answer. Along with alumni, Kalamazoo Valley's Alumni+ celebrates family, friends, faculty, students, community, and volunteers. Alumni+ is inclusive, expandable, and huge. So, welcome alumni and all of our 'plus' friends as well. We're very glad you're here!

ALUMNI+

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A Call for Memories

We are beginning a new column that will, with your help, appear in future issues of your Alumni+ Newsletter. This column will feature your memories. These reminiscences do not need to be lengthy. The memory you share could be just a couple of sentences; whatever it would take to help us understand your experience.

Since Kalamazoo Valley Community College's opening in 1968, over 250,000 alumni have walked through its doors. Did you have a favorite class or an inspirational instructor? Did you forge lasting friendships or make a love connection, or do you know someone who did? What was the dreaded assignment or project? Was there a favorite class or a class you loved to hate? Did you have an 'ah ha' moment? Did you become an expert juggler? Kalamazoo Valley Community College doesn't look the same as it did in 1968. Do you have a memory of Redwood Hall? And pranks, no one played pranks in class, did they?

Even more if you have visited Kalamazoo Valley through the years; perhaps you accompanied a student to an event? Did you attend a concert or sporting event here? Maybe a Career Fair beckoned you to the Kalamazoo Valley campus.

We look forward to you sharing your memories. The memory you recount might provide some reassurance to a current student. You may inspire or encourage someone to embark or continue on their academic path. Or, maybe yours will be a light hearted memory that will bring a smile. Please e-mail your Kalamazoo Valley memory to alumni@kvcc.edu. Are you reading this article, but don't have a Kalamazoo Valley memory to share? Stop in for a visit and begin making your Kalamazoo Valley memories.

Alumni+ Newsletter is published two times each year: fall and winter.

Questions about Kalamazoo Valley Alumni+ or this publication may be directed to the Alumni Relations Coordinator at: **269.488.4314** or at alumni@kvcc.edu

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Tell your story and listen to others.
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CALL FOR ENTRIES

FOR KALAMAZOO VALLEY'S FOURTH ANNUAL ALUMNI+ JURIED ART SHOW

Submissions for Kalamazoo Valley's Fourth Annual Alumni+ Juried Art Show will be accepted from January 28 through March 6, 2015. All media are welcome. Participation in this juried show is open to previous Kalamazoo Valley students who have graduated or taken classes in any field at the college. Currently enrolled students are not eligible for this show. Awards include a \$500 Best of Show Award, \$300 Director's Award, three \$100 Honorable Mentions, and a People's Choice Award.

The show will open with a reception at 5:30 p.m. on April 3 in the Center for New Media, Arcadia Commons Campus in downtown Kalamazoo, as part of the City's Art Hop event. Art selected for the show will remain until the end of April. The art show is sponsored by Kalamazoo Valley's Alumni+ program and was launched in April 2010 as a way for graduates, former students, and supporters of Kalamazoo Valley to stay connected to the college and each other. Previous Kalamazoo Valley Alumni+ Art Show entrants have come from a variety of backgrounds, including liberal arts, law enforcement, medical coding, accounting, and other fields of study.

All entries are due in CNM Room 105 by March 6, 2015, at 5 p.m. All 2D work (photography, drawing, painting, digital illustration, etc.) must be framed and/or ready to hang. Entries limited to three per artist. The categories include photography, ceramics, sculpture, painting, drawing, web design, animation and video, and mixed media. Information and entry forms are in CNM Room 105 and online https://www.kvcc.edu/alumni/artshow/AlumniArtShow_SubmissionForm.pdf.

TANGY SMITH '82

Retires in Style After 33 Years



After 33 years at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Tangy Smith, Testing Center supervisor, is forging ahead to a new chapter in life. Just one day before her official retirement date, Smith reflected on her time spent at Valley. Following her freshman year at Western Michigan University, Smith became a student at Kalamazoo Valley and accepted a work-study position as a receptionist in the Testing Center. Upon graduating from Valley in 1982, she not only continued to work toward her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at WMU, but also remained an employee in the Testing Center. When she graduated from WMU in 1985, she wasn't ready to leave the Kalamazoo Valley community.

Smith's passion has always been in the political arena, but when asked why she didn't pursue a career in that field after graduation she explained, "Every student deserves to have the best academic experience and the most individualized attention possible, and that's what I was dedicated to giving them."

Looking back at her time as a student, Smith says she was inspired and encouraged by many mentors, especially Valley faculty. Smith fondly remembers her acclaimed professor Tom Oberlink and the influence he had on her educational success. He encouraged her to keep working toward her goals and earn her degree.

Smith has witnessed and experienced many changes as the school has transformed, but maintains that the college has always demonstrated an unwavering drive to flourish and be the best they can be. The diverse population of motivated individuals at Valley was a key component to help her feel welcome and successful. Smith believes strongly that it is important to maintain this diverse community through recruitment. She is excited to see new talent come to the college and is confident that new and fresh ideas will continue to come forth for further success.

Aside from her notable decades at Valley, Smith is also known for her positive attitude and the ability to keep people laughing and smiling. "I didn't have one bad day of work in 33 years. I loved and enjoyed my time here," she said. Smith plans to follow her passion for politics. She is already enrolled in a political policy class at WMU. As one door closes and the next opens, Smith will honor and celebrate her time spent as student, employee, and respected alumna. "I feel good leaving Valley," she said. "I feel like I am leaving a legacy with no regrets."



Community Vision for Kalamazoo's Future

HEALTHY STE

GREETINGS FROM MARILYN SCHLACK, KALAMAZOO VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENT

I am writing to bring you up-to-date about our progress in the development of the new Health Focused Campus in downtown Kalamazoo.

The project partners Bronson Healthcare, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College believe that the campus will be a catalyst for downtown and the region by fostering urban revitalization and employment, improving access to sustainable food, as well as educating individuals and families about the crucial link between good nutrition and physical and mental well-being.

The campus, located on 13 acres donated by Bronson Healthcare, will be home to three separate facilities.

CULINARY/HEALTH CAREERS

The first and second floors of this three-story 76,000-square-foot structure will be dedicated to Kalamazoo Valley's new culinary arts program and the third floor to its health careers programs: Nursing, EMT, and Respiratory Care. The kitchen areas of this building will feature a community kitchen for outreach classes,

demonstration cooking seminars, as well as a tiered kitchen classroom for large-scale demonstration cooking seminars.

In addition, a health focused café and restaurant space will be featured on the main level of the building overlooking the restored Portage Creek.

The health careers programs will make use of state-of-the-art skills labs and simulation rooms to create real-world hands-on learning for students. Flexible group-based education rooms and associated observation and debriefing spaces will allow students to both watch and participate in treatment situations.

FOOD INNOVATION

This one-story 16,400-square-foot facility will house four major program components: food education, flexible indoor growing spaces, food safety and processing areas, and outdoor growing areas. The indoor growing area is where KVCC educators and students will explore new trends in growing food indoors and in urban environments.

Examples of the types of emerging trends that will be researched within the space include hydroponics and aquaponics. The processing area is designed for harvesting and cleaning consumables with the goal of providing local institutions with clean, healthy, and



Culinary/Health Careers Building

PS FORWARD

ready-to-use produce. A dedicated lab space will be used to teach and advance the study of food safety.

The outdoor production space will allow for hands-on greenhouse growing as well as further research into the relationships between food and nutrients. The sustainable aspects of the educational programs will be showcased in the building systems, including a green roof and geothermal heating and cooling systems.

MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is developing a single-story approximately 17,000-square-foot building that will house mental health services for adults, youth, and families. It will also provide improved access to services, information and referral services, peer-support services, and adult emergency services.

The new clinic will be a “health home” that will serve as the central point for directing person-centered planning and care. This will facilitate a close relationship with Bronson Methodist Hospital to prevent avoidable hospital admissions, readmissions and emergency department utilization, and provide timely post-discharge follow up for patients.

The synergies developed between the project organizers, the new medical school, the City of Kalamazoo, and

others will meet increasing consumer demand for holistic approaches to food education and health by preparing the next generation of professionals for existing and emerging careers.

In addition to the three facilities planned for the campus, the project calls for the enhancement of the area adjacent to Portage Creek with a trail system and landscape improvements to engage with Upjohn Park and connect the campus with the surrounding neighborhoods. The plan promotes walkability and mobility to downtown. Other improvements will include modifications to the land adjacent to both sides of Portage Creek to restore the native landscape and provide areas for wildlife habitats.

The campus will be landscaped with native vegetation and plantings to restore the natural edge of the Creek and allow for the plantings to be utilized as an educational opportunity for Kalamazoo Valley and others. There will also be a unique connection to the food innovation facility and programming by promoting plantings that reinforce agriculture, urban gardening, and pollination.

We continue to approach local, state, and national foundations, businesses, and individuals to secure the additional funding required for the project.

More information is available at www.kvcc.edu/grow.

Profile in Excellence

CATCHING UP WITH MATT LAHMAN '87

Chief Operations Officer of Kalsee Credit Union, Matt Lahman, graduated from Kalamazoo College in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration and Economics and began his career in banking. The value of higher education and a four-year degree speaks for itself when looking at Lahman's credentials and experience over the past 25 years. However, receiving his diploma from the esteemed private liberal arts college was not the only factor that accelerated his career.

After graduating from Centerville High School, Lahman spent two years as a full-time student and athlete at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Like many students who just graduated from high school, Lahman didn't quite know what to expect when contemplating the idea of attending a four-year university in the fall. "It can be overwhelming at the big colleges not knowing



what you want to do with your life, or who to ask for help," Lahman explained. He appreciated the attention he received from the instructors and counselors

at Kalamazoo Valley, who were very attentive and committed to helping him to set and achieve his goals, which was especially valuable when working around his busy athletic schedule.

Kalamazoo Valley seemed like the right choice for Lahman especially when the opportunity to play basketball for the school presented itself. He already knew Coach Dick Shilts from his participation in high school basketball camp. In 1987, Lahman's sophomore year at Valley, the men's basketball team took home the first state championship title for the college.

Valley was not favored to win this championship. Competing teams, primarily from the east side of the state, had achieved more victories than Shilts' team. Lahman recalls being excited to be able to take the state title with his teammates and coach, but it was even more of an honor to be named the winner of the Dale B. Lake Award, which gives annual recognition to outstanding student-athletes at Valley. Lahman's dedication to his academic achievements as well as his outstanding athletic contributions, were distinctly recognized by many of his peers and advisors at Valley.

Two-and-a-half decades later, Lahman is proud to be an alumnus of Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is looking forward to becoming involved with the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Foundation and giving back to the college. His son is a senior at Schoolcraft this year and is considering following in his dad's footsteps and joining the Kalamazoo Valley community as a student after graduation.



*Matt Lahman '87
COO Kalsee Credit Union*

Distinguished Alumni Award

NoViolet Bulawayo '03 to Receive Top Award for Alumni

Kalamazoo Valley Community College has announced that author NoViolet Bulawayo is the 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. She will receive the award during commencement on December 14 at Miller Auditorium on Western Michigan University's campus.

NoViolet was born in Zimbabwe and immigrated to the United States when she was 18. She moved to Kalamazoo to join family already living here. She graduated from Kalamazoo Valley Community College with an associate of art degree in liberal arts in May 2003. She has credited Kalamazoo Valley instructors with sparking her interest in writing. "I realized that I was very passionate about writing and reading and I also received encouraging responses from my instructors," says Bulawayo.

After leaving Kalamazoo Valley, NoViolet went on to attend Texas A & M University and was recognized with a Truman Capote Fellowship at Cornell University, where she earned her master of fine arts degree in creative writing. She was also Wallace Stegner Fellow with Stanford University's creative writing program.

She won the 2011 Caine Prize for African Writing, was shortlisted for the 2009 SA PEN Studzinski Award, and the 2013 Man Booker Prize. Her work was also long-listed for the 2013 Guardian First Book Award. Her writing has appeared in *Guernica*, *The Telegraph*, *Callaloo*, *The Boston Review*, *Newsweek*, and *The Warwick Review*, as well as in anthologies in Zimbabwe, South Africa and the UK. Her book, "We Need New Names," was included on Oprah Winfrey's list of Nine Must-Read Books for June 2013. She was also a featured writer at the Open Book Festival in Cape Town, South Africa.

NoViolet continues to gain recognition and praise worldwide. In February of 2014 she was named the winner of the Inaugural Etisalat Prize for Literature award, which was created in 2013. Just a month after winning the Etisalat award, she took the 2014 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Fiction. In addition to the \$10,000 cash prize, NoViolet will also receive a one-week residency in The Distinguished Visiting Writers Series at the University of Idaho's MFA Program in Creative Writing.

Nominations are now being accepted for next year's award. The award criteria is in the next column. Nominate for 2015 now!



ALUMNI+

Kalamazoo VALLEY™

ALUMNI+

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Kalamazoo Valley Community College is proud to annually recognize an alumnus of distinction who has used his/her education toward personal achievement and contribution to the community.

We invite nominations for this distinctive award.

AWARD CRITERIA INCLUDES

- The nominee shall have earned a minimum of 30 credit-hours from Kalamazoo Valley Community College.
- The nominee shall have earned distinction in his/her career through continued education, certifications, professional development, training, professional recognition and/or outstanding contributions to the field. Or, the nominee shall have modeled personal growth and accomplishment that reflects a transformed life or lifestyle.
- The nominee shall be recognized by peers or mentors for their participation and contributions to their community.
- The nominee shall be available to receive the award at the spring commencement of the year in which the award is made.

Please nominate your choice by using the online form at:



www.kvcc.edu/alumni

Special Announcement



Kalamazoo Valley Online Job Board

View and apply for jobs on the nation's largest entry-level job board, create your resume with a resume builder, build, update and forward your online career portfolios to potential employers, view career events, get employment advice and job search tips, and view videos and more at www.collegecentral.com/kvcc.

More updates available at
www.kvcc.edu/news and at
 [/KVCCAlumni](https://www.facebook.com/KVCCAlumni)

Helping Students find a Career **Alumni+ and Friends Needed as Mentors**

Kalamazoo Valley's Student Success Center needs you. Community Partner, volunteer mentors from varied career fields are needed to provide experiential learning for interested Kalamazoo Valley students. As a mentor, you would share information about your job with students interested in pursuing a similar career.

Kim Garvison, Strengths Coach at Kalamazoo Valley, said students first complete a personal career research plan. Briefly, this plan asks that students do in-depth research into careers that interest them. Then, students learn their own unique Strengths by completing the StrengthsQuest assessment. They then have the opportunity to affirm and develop their Strengths through Strengths Coaching.

During this coaching, students can explore career paths and complete job analyses that examine how they may apply and leverage their Strengths in that field. Students are then matched with a Community Partner who is currently working in that field. The experiential education between student and mentor might be a 30-minute telephone interview or a few hours of job shadowing. Garvison noted that recently her office had students interested in acting and agricultural careers. Unfortunately, there were no

volunteer mentors in the database with which to pair the students.

Becoming a volunteer-mentor is easy, and someone from Kalamazoo's Student Strengths Development Office will even come to you. After initial information is gathered, you will be asked to complete the StrengthsQuest assessment. The assessment can be done in private, at a time and location that is convenient for you. Visit <https://www.kvcc.edu/services/Strengths/> to learn more about identifying your Strengths. Once your Strengths have been identified, you will receive one-on-one coaching about your top five Strengths, and how they apply to you. You will then become part of our database of volunteer-mentors, ready to be paired with a student interested in your career field.

Garvison emphasized that the goal is to help students find an engaging career where they can maximize their Strengths. Help Kalamazoo Valley students make a more informed career choice and be a volunteer-mentor and share information about your job and career field. Contact the Student Success Center, Student Strengths Development at 269.488.4433 or by email at Strengths@kvcc.edu.