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The Grand Rapids Press

January 13, 2006

GR film students capture Midwest snowboard culture

You've seen the movies -- "Tangerine Dream," "Endless Summer" and "Steeper and Deeper." They feature a half-dozen guys and girls roaming through a country, or even a continent, on surfboards, snowboards, skateboards or skis.

It looks like the sweet life.

Everyone is either jumping off mammoth cliffs, riding the curl of monster waves or carving down mind-blowing fields of pristine snow. You wonder how you, too, can get a gig like that.

There is a way.

Marc Moline, Steve Cummings, and Jake Richardson aren't sitting back wondering "what if?"

The seniors at Kendall College of Art and Design are making that dream happen by creating their own snowboarding film.

"My absolute number one passion is snowboarding," said Moline, a Rockford High School graduate. "The second is graphic design and multi-media.

"To keep us as involved as possible in both our art and riding, we began brainstorming the making of a Midwest snowboard film. Over the past six or seven months, a few small ideas have become a full-blown production."

The Concept

Their film -- "Midwest What!" -- will combine footage shot by the creators in addition to clips submitted by other riders. It will show snowboarders in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Indiana.

"We sent out packets of information about the production last summer and we've gotten a lot of (snowboarding) shops interested." Moline, 23, said. "We also have resorts that are interested and want us to shoot there so they have representation in the film. People from all over the Midwest have said they're going to be submitting their own video. The response has been overwhelming."

Every day, when Moline checks his e-mail, there are more video clips and letters from snowboarders excited about the project.

As the snowboarding season winds down, the producers will have to review and edit all the footage, then find a way to get it distributed. Their goal is to have the finished product debut in the fall on DVD under the name of Antix Media.

"We're trying to show snowboarding through the eyes of the rider," Moline said. "We hope to have some narration points to spice things up a bit. And we'll include some natural audio, too."

Imagine it. Then do it.

Making movies isn't just for the Spielbergs anymore. As digital video cameras and production software have improved, so has the quality of independent films. Some Web sites now offer amateur movie makers a forum to submit their clips.

The most popular site is www.ifilm.com, which shows amateur and professional videos, movies, trailers and viral videos. It's been so successful that MTV jumped into the on-demand film train and bought ifilm last fall.

Clips are sorted by category and run anywhere from 30 seconds to several minutes.

Extreme sports fans will want to click on the "action sports/adrenaline" tab to find video shorts involving skate, snow, surf and water sports, plus slams and mid-air stunts.

Although a few indie films take producers to the big time of movie-making, Moline isn't creating a DVD for fame or profit, he said.

"It's for the benefit of the snowboarding community here in the Midwest," Moline said.

"There's so much talent here in the Midwest, it's ridiculous. There are kids who are lapping the tow ropers, accessing the jumps and doing the same rails over and over. They get so good."

Ken Taylor, a snowboard instructor at Cannonsburg Ski Area, agrees.

"It's been long overdue," Taylor, 25, said of Moline's movie. "There's always been a huge skiing and snowboarding culture in the Midwest. Each area of the country has their own culture, and the Midwest has its own quirks. It's cool that someone's finally going to show it."

The Grand Rapids Press

January 13, 2006

Festival's poster gets new look

HOLLAND -- Grand Rapids artist Kenneth Cadwallader's impressionistic "Splash of Tulips" will be the image on this year's Tulip Time Festival poster.

"We are delighted with Kenneth's work showcasing the tulip through this fine canvas print," says Tamra Bouman, the festival's executive director.

The festival plans to offer a higher quality limited-edition poster this year.

Replacing the 500 signed 24-by-36-inch poster will be 250 signed and numbered 21-by-27-inch limited edition giclee canvas prints that will sell for \$195 -- three times the cost of limited-edition posters last year.

"We just feel we are taking the poster to the new level," Bouman said.

The giclee process takes a high-resolution digital image of the painting, runs it through a computer connected to a specialized printer and sprays the inks onto archival art paper or synthetic canvas.

Giclees produce an image as close to the original as possible.

Although the specialized process is time-consuming to produce, the image provides detail and color that can last up to 200 years.

Each limited-edition giclee of "Splash of Tulips" will be signed by the artist and comes with a certificate of authenticity.

In addition to the limited-edition giclee, the poster image also will be available on 18-by-24-inch posters for \$30, and 8-by-10-inch posters in addition to notecards, mugs and clothing.

The soft hues of the impressionist "Splash of Tulips" is a departure from the style of festival posters in recent years.

Initial interest is strong, and Bouman expects the posters to sell out.

From Southwest Michigan, Cadwallader studied at Kendall College of Art and Design before studying abroad at the Royal College of Arts in London, where he began to develop his impressionistic style.

Next he headed to Chicago, where he studied at the Palette and Chisel Academy, where his career took off. He finished his formal learning at the Loveland Academy of Fine Art in Colorado.

"I'm excited to be a part of this year's Tulip Time Festival," Cawallader said.

"'Splash of Tulips' was inspired by the true beauty of the tulip. The painting encompasses the soft grace of the tulip and the joy that the Tulip Time Festival brings. Using impressionistic brush strokes, I chose subtle hues of pinks, blues, whites and greens to bring the painting alive," Cadwallader said.

The Grand Rapids Press

January 29, 2006

Working artists discuss finding jobs in real world

GRAND RAPIDS -- The competition is stiff, secure full-time jobs are few, and you may spend as little as 20 percent of your time actually making art. On top of that, your work won't get much respect in the world of fine art.

Even with a sales pitch like that, the field of commercial illustration continues to attract thousands of college graduates every year hungry to make a living doing what they love.

This group includes the 12 artists in "360: Illustrators Come Full Circle," the current exhibit at the Kendall College of Art and Design gallery.

Back to school

The show features the artwork of a dozen Kendall graduates from the past two decades who have succeeded as illustrators and lived to tell about it. About eight of them will visit the campus to relate their stories as part of Kendall's Illustration Program, "Career Day," at a panel discussion Tuesday and then informally at the show's reception that evening.

(The morning panel discussion with the illustrators is for Kendall students, but other who want to attend should call Christine Brown at 451-2787, ext. 1150, to see if space is available.)

"We want to show the practical end of things," said Michael Moore, a 1993 graduate who works full-time as a graphic artist at The Grand Rapids Press. "We want to show them what happens after you get your degree, what's the first step you need to take."

Moore organized "360" with Milt Klingensmith, a 1992 graduate who also works full-time at the Press (each has three works in the show). Klingensmith said he wants to give students tips about how to succeed as a freelancer, which is how most of the artists in "360" make a living.

"Commercial artists need to be able to work with art directors. Fine artists don't do that.

You need to convince the art director you're the person for the job," Klingensmith said.

"You only spend 20-40 percent of the time making art. The rest is spent dealing with art directors and advertising yourself."

Diverse approaches

"360" features a broad range of stylistic approaches to illustration, from anime-inspired cartoons to folk-art riffs. This diversity differs from the real world, where much duplication of popular styles occurs, Moore and Klingensmith said.

"We wanted to show successful people who were going their own direction and not trying to emulate celebrity illustrators," Klingensmith said.

The images in "360" are generally pleasing to the eye, accessible, clever, creative and well-crafted. They make easier viewing than the work in a typical art exhibit, although they don't keep you engaged as long as a multilayered, contemporary art piece might.

That's not necessarily a bad thing, Moore said.

"This type of show can reach more people than a fine art show, because it has been made for the masses. It's seen by many more people than a fine art show," said Moore, who also acknowledged, "the work isn't made to last. It's made for a quick view and then it's tossed, so the works don't stand the test of time, but they have universal appeal."

"360" also demonstrates a gray area where commercial and fine art can overlap. At least two pieces in the show got their start as artwork created by the illustrator for personal enjoyment, not a job.

In each case -- Christy DeHoog Johnson's acrylic and pastel collage painting, "Tower at Sunset," which appeared in a Steelcase Foundation annual report; and Jody Williams' painting, "Target," which ran in a Kent County Literacy Program piece -- the work was seen in a gallery, after which the artist was contacted to use it in a publication.

The Enquirer

January 30, 2006

Marshall artist thinks big by thinking small

In 1956, David Koenig, then a high school student, took a picture of a kitten curled up in his slippers at his parents' farmhouse.

"We had a lot of cats on our farm. I think they drank more milk than I did," said the 1957 Marshall High School graduate. "I took the picture with my Brownie camera."

Thirty years later, in 1986, he found that old black-and-white photo in a box. And he decided to give it a new life.

Using colored pencils and a magnifying glass, Koenig recreated the piece - at a size of 2 1/4 by 3 7/8 inches - and named it "Security."

Koenig submitted "Security" to the Miniature Art Society of New Jersey contest and won an honorable mention award.

"I sold that one," he said. "So I was enthused to do more."

Koenig's interest in miniature art started in early 1986 when he saw a notice in the back of "American Artist Magazine" for a miniature art contest.

According to the Web site miniature-art.com, miniature art is extremely detailed work. It also is colorful work with great composition. It can be no more than a one-sixth scale of the actual subject.

"When I saw the requirements, I thought, 'I can do that,'" he said. "I thought (the photo with the kitten) would make a good miniature art piece because of all the detail in it."

Over the years, Koenig has won several awards and has had his work published in books.

Earlier this month, he took home second place in the Miniature Art Society of Florida show for his entry "Oh, That Moan of the Cello" in the human figure category.

This year 1,100 works were submitted from around the world to the Florida show, according to MASF Press Representative Kay Petryszak.

"I was glad to hear that I won," Koenig said. "I submitted five pieces. I always figure I have a chance, but you never know what the judges want. You are at their mercy."

Koenig's art will be on display at the MASF show, which takes place in Clearwater, Fla., until Feb. 5.

With all the miniature art that Koenig has done, he and the farmhouse kitten piece have something special in common: They both took decades before their artistic appeal was publicly realized.

Koenig, 67, started working for Manufactured Homes Inc. in Marshall, right after high school. Koenig said his dad got him the job.

But his passion was art.

He said signs of his artistic ability started when he was a child.

"Art was my God-given talent. I started drawing when I started to walk. You have to know that something is going on there," he said. "I drew on everything."

So in 1980, at age 41, he quit the manufacturing job and headed to Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids. Koenig said he was ready for a change.

"I never ventured out like that before. I worked with Manufactured Homes Inc. for over 20 years. I was taking a chance," he said.

It was at Kendall that Koenig's peers took notice of his meticulous nature.

"When I first started (at Kendall), instructors would tell me not to be so serious about the details," Koenig said.

But it was his love for detail that got him noticed nationally.

And Koenig likes how it sets him apart from other artists.

"I like doing things small. I like to draw so when someone looks at it, they wonder how I did it."

Pioneer

February 3, 2006

Ferris students to perform during Super Bowl halftime show

BIG RAPIDS - The chance of a lifetime is exactly what eight Ferris State University students will have Feb. 5 - Super Bowl Sunday.

That chance includes an up close and personal view of the Rolling Stones when they perform live during the big game's halftime show and an opportunity to see just what does go into preparing 2,000 people to come together in seven minutes to put on a performance seen by millions of people around the world.

"It is unbelievable how fast this comes together," said Music Industry Management Association President Heidi Grubb, who will be performing with her peers at the right side of the stage during the half-time show. "It is amazing they can have 2,000 people set up in such a short amount of time."

According to Grubb, the trip really is a chance for members of MIMA, a registered student organization at Ferris, to gain real-world experience for a career in entertainment event planning.

"Seeing the best and the worst of people gives you an idea of what you want to do in the future ...I know I definitely don't want to be the person who has to answer 2,000 people's questions," the Traverse City native said with a laugh.

Maybe this experience has taught Grubb being the woman of 1,000 answers isn't her gig but she might make a contact or two that opens the doors to future opportunities such as internships or future employment.

"This is a very good networking opportunity," MIMA Vice President Morgan Starner said.

A degree provides the back up and networking is the foot in the door, both women added.

Career experience won't be the only thing students take from their Super Bowl experience - a little perspective into how they can make MIMA-sponsored events run more smoothly also is a perk.

"This is probably the best field trip we've ever had," said Starner, who hails from Big Rapids. "You get to see what goes wrong, what goes right... basically what works."

Pioneer

February 4 & 5, 2006

20th Annual Ambassador Awards presented

BIG RAPIDS - At the 2006 annual meeting of the Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce, seven individuals received Ambassador Awards for contributing to the positive image of the Mecosta County community by helping make it a great place to live and work.

The MCACC Board of Directors and The Ambassador Club presented the 20th Annual Ambassador Awards at the annual meeting sponsored by Chemical Bank Friday morning at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center.

"Chemical Bank is pleased to sponsor the 2006 annual meeting and 20th Annual Ambassador Awards," said President of Chemical Bank Karl Linebaugh. "We commit to this sponsorship every year because of the importance of this meeting and these awards."

Chamber President John Norton welcomed everyone to the meeting and Big Rapids City Manager Steve Sobers gave the invocation before breakfast was served. The Chamber's Executive Director Anja Wing presented council recognition awards and Jerry Conrad was named honorary member of the chamber.

Linebaugh presented the Ambassador Awards in order to recognize individuals for their goodwill in the community. The following people received Ambassador Awards:

- Thelma Brown, sales associate of Fairman's Apparel;
- Melissa Hanger, collection agent and liaison for City Health Care for the City of Big Rapids;
- Lynn Miller, sales and events professional of the Holiday Inn and Conference Center;
- Barb Obert, receptionist and account clerk for the City of Big Rapids;
- Melanie Schlaupitz, office manager of Ken's Sports and Trophy Center;
- Lisa Weiler, secretary at Ferris State University's athletic department; and
- Tricia Wirth, realtor assistant at Exit Northern Exposure Realty.

Among the distinguished guests attending the event were Big Rapids Mayor Edward Burch, Michigan State Rep. Darwin Booher, 49th Circuit Court Judge Scott Hill-Kennedy and Mecosta County Register of Deeds Joanne Brown.

The 2005 retiring chamber board members include Lori Brock, Joe LaFramboise, Suzie Pierce, Kevin Roe and Laura Veersma.

The Jackson Citizen Patriot

February 5, 2006

Optometrist keeps eye on Third World

For Heidi Schefferly optometry isn't just a career. It's something that allows her to serve others, locally and across the world.

Every year she travels to a Third World country to provide eye care to people, many of whom wouldn't be able to see without the help of volunteers like Schefferly.

Five years ago during a trip to Honduras, Schefferly met Nelson, a young boy. He has Marfan's syndrome, a disorder that weakens tissue causing the lens inside the eye to become displaced.

"He was virtually blind," Schefferly said. "But we gave him the gift of sight."

Schefferly serves through Volunteer Optometric Service to Humanity. She has traveled to Honduras for the past seven years and earlier this month spent 10 days in Peru.

For Schefferly, having the opportunity to help people in other countries is the most rewarding part of her career.

"I get a great sense of pleasure being able to help these people," she said. "It realigns your priorities. They don't complain, and they don't realize what they don't have."

In addition to practicing optometry in other countries, Schefferly runs her own practice at 306 W. Washington Ave. in the Jackson Professional Building. She bought the practice almost seven years ago after graduating from the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University.

As a partner in her office, Schefferly's responsibilities include managing the staff, hiring, purchasing frames and patient care. She usually arrives at the office at 7:30 a.m. The majority of Schefferly's day is spent in the exam room with patients. From 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. it is one patient after another. She averages about 20 patients a day.

Dr. Jim Serino has worked in the same office with Schefferly for the past six years.

"(Dr. Schefferly) brings a lot to the table. She is a good businesswoman and she's small-town oriented," Serino said. "We are very much on the same wavelength as far as patients are concerned. We're not business people, we're people people."

Growing up in Alcona County, Schefferly was the third of four children. She enjoyed playing outside, especially swimming. Even as a little girl she was fascinated by the equipment used at her eye doctor's office.

Schefferly was 17 when she got her first job as a filing clerk at a medical clinic.

After graduating in 1988 from Alcona County High School, she headed to Ferris State University to study business. After two years she changed her major and completed her doctorate in optometry in 1997.

Buying a practice gave Schefferly the opportunity to determine the care her patients would receive and offer them something personal.

"In a private practice, I am able to take better care of my patients and empathize on patient care," she said. "I like connecting with people. I like the fact that I know my patients and have a great relationship with 90 percent of them."

Schefferly says she looks to her husband, Rick, as her role model.

"He has always been supportive, an inspiration," she said. "He has pushed me to become the best I can be and encouraged me to go through it all."

When she's not working, Schefferly enjoys golf and spending time with her kids.

MiBizWest

February 6, 2006

Is Grand Rapids the next play station for gamers?

GRAND RAPIDS - An online gaming company, Ferris State University, Rockford Development and The Right Place Inc. are some of the Grand Rapids area Players working to make the region more attractive to leading edge digital and animation companies.

A Technology Sustainability Advisory Council (TSAC) and a business incubator are in the formation stage to help Grand Rapids and the region's economy adjust to the shrinking of its manufacturing base. And leaders want Grand Rapids to capture its share of the more than \$33 billion dollar gaming industry.

Michael Crow, general manager of Norseman Games, operators of the worldwide, subscription-based Realm Online, want more gaming and animation companies to locate in the Grand Rapids area. Norseman Games, owned by the Wocholz family, including Realm Online game developer Scott Wocholz, relocated two-and-a-half years ago from California.

"We would like to create a synergy here in Grand Rapids that helps support the economy," Crow told *MiBiz*.

He said Norseman Games would like an inviting environment in the region that could attract the attention of other game developers such as Blizzard Entertainment, Atari Inc. and Sony Corp. A cluster of gaming and animation businesses would also be a place for graduates of Ferris' digital animation and game design program and other college graduates to begin careers once they complete their degrees.

Ward Makielski, program coordinator and instructor for digital animation and game design at Ferris, said the local TSAC group is trying to grow technology companies in Southwest and West Michigan. The players involved believe more competitors in the area will "mutually feed off of each other in a good way," Makielski told *MiBiz*.

Makielski, who relocated to Grand Rapids after gaining a dozen years experience in the gaming industry on the West Coast, is in an enthusiastic proponent of more job opportunities in the Grand Rapids area centered around gaming and animation. He cited Grand Rapids' strong work ethic, good values and reasonable cost of living as being more appealing than locales like Los Angeles.

"We need to see more gaming and technology companies start to grow here. There could even be investors willing to get behind young folks," Makielski said.

Right Place Inc.'s role is to bring together interested parties and explore the possibilities of new emerging areas of business that may be able to grow successfully.

Right Place Vice President Karen Wolf said TSAC is in a brainstorming stage. "There are discussions taking place. We're getting together and talking a lot. We're a resource here in the community," Wolf told *MiBiz*.

Rockford Development Group President Mike Maier said his company owns the multi-use 5 Lyons building, which houses Norseman Games as well as student housing for Ferris. After becoming acquainted with Norseman, Rockford Development brought together the gaming company and program leaders of Ferris' digital and animation program.

Rockford's goal is to create "synergy that will spur more activity and growth in that area," Maier said.

"We're also interested in seeing if Rockford can play a role in an incubator-type environment to see if we can help promote this," Maier told *MiBiz*.

Norseman Games has already reached out to the community with collaborations with Ferris and Saint Mary's Health Care. The company worked with a class at Ferris to give students experience in creating a game with all the steps, processes and knowledge involved. "We wanted to teach the kids exactly what it takes to build a game," Crow said.

Norseman is in the talking stages of developing games for Saint Mary's Health Care to be used as teaching tools to help young patients learn about disease.

"The easiest way to teach a child is through a game," Crow told *MiBiz*. A game about pancreatic cancer would help afflicted children learn about the cancer and "believe fear" and help with the ability to heal.

Dr. Forzley, medical director of informatics for Saint Mary's, sees a lot of potential in working with area gaming and animation businesses and students, to pioneer ways to reach out to children and adults. Ferris students have already created patient education materials on second-hand smoke. Forzley said one student created a game where players shoot or capture cigarettes - destroyed cigarettes gain extra life for the player.

Forzley said animated games are useful for general education to provide information about patient procedures. Information for clinical training for residents and physicians is a "future exploration area." The buzz around Grand Rapids about digital gaming and animation arose from the Ferris digital animation and game design program that started in 2003. The first four-year program of its type in Michigan has been very successful by all accounts.

Makielski said 40 students enrolled the first year, 60 students the second year and "last fall we capped at 60 students and squeezed in another dozen students this winter semester." Currently three fulltime instructors and three adjunct instructors are involved in the program.

Pioneer

February 6, 2006

Plan to attend Friends of Ferris dinner and auction

Big Rapids and Ferris State University have grown up together with the arrival of the first permanent settlers at the Big Rapids in the Muskegon River in 1855 and the opening of Big Rapids Industrial School, now FSU, above a store in the community's downtown area in 1884.

Big Rapids has now entered the second half of its second century after celebrating its sesquicentennial in 2005 and FSU is now in its 13th decade of offering higher education as Big Rapids Industrial School, Ferris Institute, Ferris State College, and now as FSU from a multi-building campus that covers much of the city's south side.

FSU's mission still rings true to the philosophy of its founder, Woodbridge N. Ferris, who went out of his way to provide hands-on training for the occupations of the times. The university continues to change to fill existing needs with a high success rate for placement of its graduates.

Over the years, numerous individuals and organizations have stepped forward to keep the growing educational institution on track. And that need still exists today.

Many of the university's programs are highly dependent on costly equipment and supplies that require more dollars for operation than many other state institutions of higher learning.

Funding, of course, is a major challenge and requires a special degree of advocacy that has grown over recent decades with a political action committee known as the Friends of Ferris.

Each year, that organization holds a fund-raiser in February to help fund its operations.

This year, the Friends of Ferris' 17th annual dinner/auction fund-raiser will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center on Feb. 18, beginning with a social hour at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. This year's theme is "Enjoy the Great Outdoors."

We urge area residents to continue to support the advocacy of the Friends for FSU by attending this benefit event. Tickets are available from Friends of Ferris members at \$50 each.

Join us on Feb. 18 for a great night out on the town while helping to support a great university.

The Grand Rapids Press

February 10, 2006

Former football stars at GVSU, Ferris must learn to walk again

Until recently, Jim Bourdlais and Tamayrr Salahuddin had little in common.

Both played on the defensive line in college football.

But Bourdlais, 21 and white, attended Newberry High School in the Upper Peninsula before enrolling two years ago at Ferris State as a 6-foot-6, 265-pound recruit.

Salahuddin, 23, is an African-American who graduated from Ottawa Hills. The 6-3, 340-pounder was a AllAmerican at Grand Rapids Community College, spent one year at Texas State and then became a member of Grand Valley State's 2005 NCAA Division II championship team.

But soon they'll be connected by one thing -- the struggle to walk again.

On Jan. 15, Bourdlais and his brother, Ferris State defensive tackle Bill Bourdlais, were on their way to an archery league in Barryton, near Big Rapids. Their car hit some black ice, slid out of control and catapulted into a tree.

Jim Bourdlais, who is an accomplished archer, suffered a broken neck, and is currently at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.

Nine days later, Salahuddin was headed to classes at GVSU. He pulled into an intersection near campus and was hit on the passengers side by another vehicle.

Salahuddin sustained a fractured neck, and is scheduled to leave Spectrum Health Monday to begin his rehabilitation at Mary Free Bed.

Both consider themselves lucky to be alive.

And both are determined to walk again.

"I was first told that I would not have feeling from my nipples down, but I said that was wrong, and I've already begun to get feeling in my hands and arms, and the tips of my thighs," Bourdlais said.

"When I first asked if I'd be able to walk again, the doctors and nurses told me it would be up to me and God. Well, I'm going to walk again, and I'm going to shoot my bow again.

"I'm not going to be kept down."

According to Salahuddin's mother, Cindy Salahuddin, her son might not even be alive today had it not been for an off-duty paramedic who was seated in his car near the scene of the accident.

"After the impact, Tamayrr was slumped over, and his air passage was blocked," Cindy Salahuddin said. "The off-duty paramedic ran to Tamayrr's car and lifted his head up to make sure he could breath.

"It's devastating what Tamayrr is going through. You believe, especially him, with his size, to be invincible.

"But I'm optimistic."

So is Tamayrr, despite wearing a metal halo attached to his head, and despite having movement on his right side, but limited mobility on his left.

"I almost died, and I never thought something like this would ever happen to me," he said.

"My family and friends, and my coaches and teammates from Grand Valley, keep me going. They make me want to get stronger so I can walk again. I know it's going to take incredibly hard work, and lots of prayers, but I have to walk again."

Even Grand Valley coach Chuck Martin and Ferris State's Jeff Pierce have had difficult times dealing with the significant injuries to their defensive tackles.

"It's hard to fathom until you see big Tamayrr with that halo, and the screws going through his head. Then it hits you that this is the same guy who was breaking through blocks for you just a couple months ago in our national championship game," Martin said.

"It shocks you back into reality."

Added Pierce: "This makes you appreciate every day you have in this world. It also makes you appreciate the fact that these two guys are strong, healthy athletes who will accept every challenge placed before them to get healthy again. Hopefully, to walk again."

For Tamayrr Salahuddin, a day hasn't gone by since the accident when he doesn't think back to the Lakers' 21-17 win over Northwest Missouri State in the Division II title game.

"It makes me remember how far I came to play in a national championship game..... and how far I now have to come to walk again," he said.

The Detroit News

February 10, 2006

Granholt gambles on budget

\$4313 proposal relies on closing tax loopholes, hiking fees to increase aid to schools, colleges.

LANSING -- Public schools, research universities, home health care workers, mass transit riders and the working poor who have no health insurance are the winners in state spending plans for next year laid out by Gov. Jennifer Granholm Thursday.

Losers include liquor store owners, businesses that enjoy certain tax breaks, private college students who need financial aid and municipalities hoping for an increase in the \$1.1 billion state revenue sharing pot for police and fire protection, road repairs and garbage pickup.

But the budget plan is built on potentially shaky ground -- closing a number of tax loopholes and increasing fees. Those proposals already are drawing fire from key members of the Legislature. In addition, the budget is likely to become caught up in intense election year politics, as the governor seeks another four-year term and all 148 legislative seats are up for grabs in November.

The Democratic governor's budget blueprint calls for a 3 percent increase to \$9.2 billion in the general fund -- the state's main checkbook -- and a 2.5 percent boost to \$42.6 billion for the overall budget, including federal dollars and state money automatically dedicated to roads, schools, natural resources and other spending. The next budget year begins Oct. 1.

"This balanced budget for the coming year will create good jobs, protect our families, and educate our children -- without a general tax increase," said state Budget Director Mary Lannoye, the chief architect of the spending proposal.

In response, Republican leaders lampooned Granholm's proposal to spend \$9.2 billion from the general fund when fiscal analysts agreed last month the state is poised to collect only \$8.3 billion. "I appreciate the governor's efforts to live within our means, but we have different definitions about what that means," said House Appropriations Chairman Scott Hummel, R-DeWitt. "Living within your means doesn't mean raising taxes on somebody or increasing fees."

Granholm replied: "We are presenting a balanced budget as the constitution requires."

The extra spending will rely on a wide range of revenue sources, including onetime gains for the sale of state lands and interest on funds the state will receive under liability settlements with tobacco companies.

The proposal also includes \$111 million from canceling a variety of business tax credits and \$23 million in liquor license fee increases that likely would be passed on to consumers. The tax loophole closings include imposing sales tax on items purchased at prison stores, driver education vehicle purchases, out-of-state purchases by insurance companies and a host of other items.

Most were approved by the Legislature in a broader tax cut scheme last year but then vetoed in a dispute with the governor.

About \$127 million in cuts would include nearly \$30 million in reductions in private college tuition programs and \$40 million in savings in Medicaid and welfare by toughening eligibility requirements and starting new cost-recovery programs.

Public schools would get a \$200-per-student state aid increase, bringing the minimum grant to \$7,075 per pupil. That's a 3 percent increase. In addition, Granholm wants \$15 million for after school programs to mentor middle school students in math, science and computer technology; \$50 million to prop up budgets in districts with declining enrollments; and a \$125 million increase for preschool programs.

"Overall, I'm pleased," said Al Short, chief lobbyist for the Michigan Education Association. "I'd rather have all the money in the per-student grant, but the governor is putting money in programs she sees as important."

State universities would get a 2 percent increase to \$1.4 billion. The three research universities -Michigan, Michigan State and Wayne State -- would get the full raise. The other dozen state universities would get a 1 percent hike and the other 1 percent would be linked to performance, outreach to low-income students and keeping tuition affordable.

Republican lawmakers lauded the overall higher education increase but slammed the plan to cut in half and eventually eliminate private college financial aid to 40,000 students.

"I don't believe it's appropriate to decimate tuition grant money," said Sen. Mike Goschka, RBrant.

Granholm also wants to raise minimum pay for home health care workers in about half of the state's counties from \$5.15 to \$6.60 an hour. About a third of the \$20 million for that item would go to workers in Wayne County.

The budget calls for a \$1 billion program the governor proposed in her State of the State address last month that would pay health care coverage for 550,000 Michigianians without health insurance. State officials say the money would come from the federal government beginning in April 2007.

A proposed hospital bed tax would generate \$42 million but would leverage federal money to be returned to hospitals that provide services to Medicaid recipients. Hospitals

that don't have a large Medicaid clientele would lose under the plan. Critics say some suburban and rural hospitals would subsidize urban hospitals. "Beaumont (Hospital in Royal Oak) is going to scream at me. That will really hit them big time. There will be a lot of resistance to it," said Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Shirley Johnson, R-Troy.

The proposal includes \$100 million in state bonding for community projects. The state would match local contributions for economic development or tourism "signature" projects, Granholm said, such as expanding Cobo Center or the Grand Rapids Art Museum.

College Funding

Under Gov. Jennifer Granholm's proposed budget, state universities will receive an average increase of 2%, a \$28-million budget increase.

SCHOOL	%INCREASE
Lake Superior State	3.86%
Saginaw Valley State	2.92%
U-M Flint	2.47%
U-M Dearborn	2.21%
Grand Valley State	2.16%
Central Michigan	2.09%
Oakland	2.04%
Michigan State	2.00%
U-M Ann Arbor	2.00%
Wayne State	2.00%
Eastern Michigan	1.95%
Northern Michigan	1.84%
Michigan Tech.	1.79%
Ferris State	1.74%
Western Michigan	1.55%

Sources: State of Michigan; Governor's office

The Grand Rapids Press

February 10, 2006

Slashing Perkins program could cost some students much-needed school funds

For Abrah Klinge, getting a \$2,000 Perkins loan meant she could stop stressing about paying for college and focus on her studies at Grand Valley State University.

"If I didn't have the loan, I don't know if I would have been able to come to Grand Valley," Klinge said.

A Perkins loan also made the difference for Rick Hubbert, 20, a GVSU junior.

"Without Perkins, I wouldn't be at VSU," the criminal justice major id. "They have helped me pay whatever (financial aid) didn't cover - my king pass... my books."

For the second year in a row, President Bush has proposed ending the w-interest, needs-based loan program because it is inefficient, while students and educators are gearing up to try to save it.

Supporters say Perkins loans, which average about \$1,875 and are available only to low-income students, play an important role in getting needy students onto campuses.

In West Michigan, nearly 5,000 students have Perkins loans totaling \$8.5 million. Nationally, 673,000, or 3 percent of all students, borrowed \$1.2 billion in 2004.

"I believe it's a travesty for the president to propose this," Hope College Financial Aid Director Phyllis Hooyman said. About 600 students at the private school used about \$1 million in Perkins loans last year.

Bush proposed eliminating the loan program in his budget, delivered to Congress this month. Last year, Congress rejected Bush's Perkins cut, and the same fight may play out again this year.

Jon Brandt, spokesman for U.S. Rep. Vern Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, said it's too early to tell which way lawmakers will come down on the proposal.

"(Congressman) Ehlers is aware that these loans are important to institutions in our area and will keep that in mind as he evaluates the proposals," Brandt said.

Most West Michigan colleges offer the loans. One exception is Aquinas College.

And no students at Davenport University or Grand Rapids Community College currently use the loans.

The Perkins program is a revolving fund that comes from federal contributions, matching college contributions and repaid loans. As students repay, the funds are used to grant other loans.

Federal contributions to the program were stopped last year and, under Bush's proposal, the government would get back its former contributions, which was estimated to be \$7 billion over 10 years.

The proposal also would end cancellations of Perkins debt, now granted to college graduates working as teachers in urban settings, nurses and law enforcement personnel.

Klinge, 20, is majoring in special education at Grand Valley. She is student teaching in Grand Rapids and said she would consider teaching in a low-income district after graduation if it would absolve her of the loan.

"It's a heck of a reason to go do it," she said.

She said her parents are helping pay tuition for her and her brother.

"It's not like a huge loan, it's just a little bit to fill in the gaps," she said. "But I'm sure there's students out there that can't afford to do without it."

Pioneer

February 10, 2006

State of Poverty Welfare Simulation shows the reality faced by low-income families

BIG RAPIDS - People got a taste of life in poverty at a State of Poverty Welfare Simulation, facilitated by the Mecosta County Michigan State University Extension office, that took place Thursday at the Mecosta Osceola Career Center.

"The object of the simulation is to sensitize us to the day-to-day realities of life faced by low-income people," said MSU Extension Family and Consumer Science Educator Shannon Lindquist, "and to motivate us to become involved in activities that help to reduce poverty in this country."

Approximately 70 people participated in the three-hour role-playing experience including teachers, administrators, MOCC students, Ferris State University students, community members and professionals. The simulation was broken down into four weeks with each week lasting about 15 minutes.

Some of the participants were part of low-income families while other volunteers acted as the different organizations and services available in the community such as the grocery store, bank, school, food pantry, pawn shop, fast cash outlet, legal aid, mortgage and realty company, utility company, jail and employment office.

Families would receive "luck of the draw" cards each week including ones that announced a lottery winning or loss, funeral costs for a deceased family member, a sick child, plumbing problems, payment of a bail bond, drive-by shooting, stolen purse, utility shut off notice, dental work, vehicle registration due and broken refrigerator. At one point a water main broke and all of the children in school had to be sent home.

Children who were left home alone were put into foster care by child protective services. Some parents forgot to feed their families and therefore received a health and nutrition warning.

"Each simulated week the noise level increases and so does the frustration level of the low-income families," Lindquist said.

Some of the comments from participants included:

- "I kind of felt bad for stealing, but we were put into predicaments and did things we never would have done otherwise."
- "It's hard work to be poor. It was exhausting."
- "There was a lot of crying and children were neglected."

- "I was forced to rob the bank because I didn't ask for a receipt when I paid my mortgage payment."
- "I started with good intentions, but there was no time to spend with my family."
- "Week one was orderly and all of the children went to school, but by the last week crime was up, there weren't many kids in school and there was a long line at the pawn shop."
- "Not many people requested receipts."
- "People didn't realize the food pantry was available because they were more focused on getting food stamps."