

## Cortney Heileman receives national award for empowering student health educators

A national organization dedicated to promoting healthy and safe college campuses has honored Cortney Heileman for her commitment to empower SVSU students to help their peers make healthy decisions.

Heileman, program coordinator and assistant director of Student Wellness Programs, received the 2017 Outstanding Advisor Award from the BACCHUS Initiatives of NASPA at the organization's national assembly in Denver Nov. 18. She leads a team of 27 peer health educators at SVSU, students who are trained to educate their peers on a variety of topics including alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, sexual responsibility,

environmental sustainability, and sexual assault prevention.

SVSU student Jenna Smith, a nursing major from Mayville and a current peer health educator, nominated Heileman for the honor.

"Cortney does a lot to empower all of us," Smith said. "She leaves notes of encouragement and praise around our office for all of us. She is always willing to help when we need it, whether it be in our personal or academic worlds, or with an event we're doing on campus for our students. Every day any of us are around Cortney is a day she makes all of us want to be the best versions of ourselves."

Another SVSU student,



Cortney Heileman

Charles Ferens, a psychology major from Saginaw and a peer health educator, was invited to present a program at the national assembly. His

presentation, "My [Green] Campus," highlighted a multitude of ways that peer health educators from around the nation can take steps to create environmentally-friendly initiatives on their respective campuses. Ferens focused on the implementation and impact of employing recycling bins in classrooms within academic halls.

Smith said her experience working with Heileman will benefit her in her career.

"She has challenged me because she knew I was capable, even though at the time I was worried I would end up letting her down. Cortney is always there to provide different possibilities and approaches for how to go about things, whether it be conflict resolution, improvising, or problem solving. She has inspired me to make a difference on SVSU's campus and in the world each and every day, whether it be big or small."

A 2011 graduate of SVSU, Heileman has overseen the Peer Health Education program since her return to campus in 2015.

NASPA is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession.

It serves a full range of professionals who provide programs, experiences, and services that cultivate student learning and success in concert with the mission of our colleges and universities.

Established in 1918 and founded in 1919, NASPA is comprised of over 15,000 members in all 50 states, 25 countries, and eight U.S. territories.

## National physics group honors Laurie Reed

The American Association of Physics Teachers has recognized Laurie Reed, lecturer of physics, for her exceptional commitment to undergraduate teaching.

A long-time member of the association, Reed has been named an AAPT Fellow for 2018. She will formally accept the fellowship at the group's 2018 winter meeting in San Diego in January.

"For me, in my quest to become an astronomer, physics was a very difficult subject," she said. "It was when I was in graduate school for astronomy and I began teaching physics for myself that many of the concepts truly became clearer to me and I realized that I really enjoyed the process of teaching physics to others."

"You can help a student learn a tough concept and to then have that person say, 'I understand that,' is very satisfying to me."



Laurie Reed

Rarely does Reed have a physics major in her classes. Most of her students are pursuing careers in the health professions. Over the years, many have thanked Reed for helping to prepare them to tackle the physics portions of the entrance exams for medical and veterinary schools.

"In my teaching, I try to do a lot of examples and demonstrations that have direct application to everyday life and to the human body," Reed explained.

Reed started teaching at SVSU in 1992 and has been a full-time lecturer since 1996. She said SVSU has consistently provided resources and many types of support to help her grow professionally.

The American Association of Physics Teachers has around 8,000 members including university and college faculty and high school teachers, and typically chooses about 10 Fellows per year.

"I am immensely grateful to my SVSU physics colleagues for nominating me," Reed said.

"My award is national-level acknowledgement that SVSU has good, dedicated faculty who teach with the best interests of students as the top priority."

# Nic Taylor

*Associate Director of Admissions • October Staff Member of the Month*

Nic Taylor's goal is to get people to like him. The associate director of Admissions employs his affable nature to convey an SVSU-is-just-like-home appeal to prospective students. "A few of them told me the other day that, out of all the colleges they visited, Nic was their favorite presenter," said Jennifer Pahl, director of Admissions.

It's 50/50 whether Taylor will respond to such compliments with humility or faux vanity — that's part of the charm. Either way, he'll consider the kudos a victory. And, in the college recruitment trade, every win counts in the year 2017.

"It's not going to be easy," Taylor said of increasing SVSU's enrollment in a state where the number of high school graduates are in decline. "Even though the demographics are bad, I have something good to offer them — I can offer them SVSU."

Taylor knows the high value of that product. He was sold on it as a high school senior in 1998, and has not regretted the investment since. There was an eight-week gap between his graduation from SVSU in 2003 and his hiring as an Admissions rep, but otherwise, the institution has remained his second home for nearly two decades.

Taylor credits his allegiance in part on the affable personalities of others. "Dick Thompson, Jim Dwyer, Jen Pahl; I was really lucky I crossed paths with these three people when I was a student," Taylor said.

Each of those individuals also influenced his professional

life. "These are people who taught me to care about the intrinsic value of the work as opposed to the money or the work," he said. Taylor also enjoys the competitive spirit of his profession — recruiting students involves strategy, aggressiveness and counter-adjustments.

"Jim used to have this newspaper clipping with a saying: 'If it ain't broke, you still need to change it,'" Taylor said of his former Admissions director. "We always have to be pushing the envelope. There's a lot of competition for recruiting students, and students are always changing."

Taylor works hard to understand that ever-changing decision-making process of 17- and 18-year-olds. Sometimes adjusting to the shifting environment involves good intuition. Other times, math reveals the best approach.

Taylor's many responsibilities include monitoring recruitment trends, right down to the minute detail. Computer programs allow him to track the many methods of communication SVSU delivers to each potential Cardinal, including how — or if — each prospect engaged with that correspondence.

Taylor sends his 2-year-old son, Brooks, all of SVSU's recruitment materials to test how others should receive SVSU's message. Nic hopes Brooks one day will choose SVSU. In this case, though, a prospect's decision to enroll may not hinge on Taylor's likability. "My son thinks he's best friends with Coop," Taylor said.



# Rachel Florence-Spaetzel

*Director of Orientation Programs • November Staff Member of the Month*

Christmas ornaments show up in Rachel Florence-Spaetzel's office earlier than most places — well before Thanksgiving.

"You should see my home: It's very 'Clark Griswold,'" she says, referring to the "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" character with an affinity for excessive amounts of holiday lights. "I have way too many lights."

Florence-Spaetzel's story at SVSU began in 2002 when the Macomb Township native was a high school junior searching for colleges to attend. "I visited the [SVSU] campus and immediately fell in love," she recalls. "I called off the rest of the search."

Early on, Florence-Spaetzel became a member of the Foundation Scholars Program, giving her a taste of what it was like to be part of a tight-knit SVSU family. "I wanted to be part of a community of ambitious students and I wanted to be social," she says. "I really fell in love with that program."

As a student, she befriended a number of classmates who remain close to her to this day — including someone special who was also enrolled with her in Brad Jarvis' "History of the American Revolution" course. It was there where she met James Spaetzel. The couple started dating and in 2009 exchanged wedding vows in Founders Hall. They now are raising a son, 1-year-old Jay, who occasionally accompanies his mother to campus events. "He's kind of like a tiny college student," she jokes.

Since starting work in Orientation Programs in August 2011 —

which followed time spent as an assistant director of Admissions beginning in 2008 — her role has involved training and leading the Orientation student leaders.

"The Orientation team is my favorite part of this job," she says. "I love watching them grow, from when they come in the summer after their freshman year until they graduate."

One of her proudest accomplishments professionally involved her efforts to increase the prestige of the Orientation leader program.

"I wanted students to be excited to do this job," she says. "That will increase the odds that I get the best students for the work. Having the right people at the door to greet freshmen and their families is important."

Florence-Spaetzel expanded the Orientation leader training program to a weeklong retreat aimed at building rapport among the group.

"It's a more intensive experience now," she says. "We get to know each other pretty well."

Florence-Spaetzel promotes a feels-like-home environment at work. Student employees working near her Wickes Hall office say it's not unusual to hear her singing during the workday. It's a pastime she also enjoys at her house too. This time of year, the music genre she prefers to sing is a no-brainer for Florence-Spaetzel: "Christmas music," she says. "I love Christmas."



## SVSU selects K-12 educators for Gerstacker leadership program



A new group of K-12 education leaders committed to professional growth will join SVSU's Gerstacker Fellowship program in 2018. As part of the initiative, 12 teachers, principals, and program administrators from across Michigan will receive concentrated leadership training over a one-year period. The experience concludes with a capstone international trip to China in June. These trips send participants to educational institutions, where they learn about international educational systems and corporate settings, and they discover how leadership plays out in different cultural and economic settings. The program was established in 2005 with a \$1.5 million endowment from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation of Midland as part of SVSU's community-minded commitment to support K-12 educators. The 2018 cohort includes:

- Lisa M. Butts, career and technical education administrator and work-based learning coordinator for Oxford Community Schools
- Kimberly Cairy, a visual arts and design educator in Saginaw Township Community Schools
- Christopher Collins, an elementary school principal for Port Huron Schools
- Nancy Mahoney, an administrator of curriculum instruction and professional learning for Clarkston Community Schools
- Scott Sawyer, director of human resources for the Saginaw Intermediate School District
- Kurtis Pake, an elementary school principal for Bangor Township Schools
- Jennifer Servoss, the IB Primary Years Programme and STEM Coordinator for Midland Public Schools
- Jennifer Todd, an elementary teacher in the Swan Valley School District
- Jill Verburg, a middle school mathematics teacher in the North Branch School District
- Laura Walsh, assistant director of special education for Rochester Community Schools
- Jill Wrzesinski, an assistant high school principal and director of college prep for Bay City Public Schools
- Zak Zuzula, a middle school teacher for Carrollton Public Schools

## Professional Profile

- **Vanessa Brooks Herd**, associate professor of social work, presented at the International Social Work conference, Oct. 10 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The presentation was titled "Two Generations, Two Countries, One Problem: What Uganda can Teach Japan about Care of Children without Parents."
- **Julie Foss**, associate professor of modern foreign languages, presented "Differentiating Content, Process, and Product to Support All Learners" at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' Annual Convention, Nov. 17-19 in Nashville. She also served on the panel "Journal Editors Present: Sharing Your Work in Scholarly Journals" and represented the Michigan World Language Association at the ACTFL Delegate Assembly.
- **Sherrin Frances**, associate professor of English, published a paper titled "Maidan Library: The Emergence of a Protest Library within Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity" in *Pacific Coast Philology*.
- **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, published "Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's 'National Salvation': A Rediscovered Lecture on Reconstruction" in the summer 2017 issue of the American Antiquarian Society's online journal *Common-place*, available at [common-place.org](http://common-place.org). Gardner also authored two short essays, "The AME Church's Place in Early Black Print Culture" and "The AME Christian Recorder in the Nineteenth Century" for the Payne Theological Seminary section of Princeton's online Theological Commons, available at [commons.ptsem.edu/payne](http://commons.ptsem.edu/payne).
- **Mark Giesler**, professor of social work, had a manuscript titled "A Place To Call Home?: A Qualitative Exploration of Public Librarians' Response To Homelessness" accepted for publication in the *Journal of Access Services*.
- **Thomas Renna**, professor emeritus of history, gave three presentations: "Luther, Hutten, and the German Nation" at the

16th Century Society Conference, Oct. 26 in Milwaukee; "The Nationalization of Martin Luther in Late 19th Century Germany" at the Luther's 95 Theses Conference, Oct. 31 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa; and "Rome and Aachen: Universal Centers in the Later Middle Ages" at the Southeastern Medieval Association, Nov. 16 in Charleston, South Carolina.

## Condolences

- To **Monica Reyes**, director of Disability Services, whose mother, Theodora "Dora" Medel, passed away Oct. 27
- To **Deborah L. Smith**, professor of teacher education, whose mother, Shirley A. Deneen, passed away Nov. 20.

## Briefly Speaking

- Faculty and staff may present the diploma jacket to graduating members of their immediate family during the Commencement ceremonies at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 15, and/or at 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 16. Please call Jim Dwyer at ext. 4209 to make arrangements.

**The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU.** University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

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## Submission Deadline:

**Noon on Wednesday before the publication date**  
**Please email submissions to: [jjboehm@svsu.edu](mailto:jjboehm@svsu.edu)**