

Dean's Message

As we begin a new year and a new semester, I want to take a moment to thank you and to share my deep appreciation for all that you do for our students, our college, and our community. 2025 was a year of hard work, continued change, and important progress. You balanced teaching, scholarship, service, accreditation, advising, and countless behind-the-scenes responsibilities—often while supporting students who are navigating complex challenges in their lives. You showed up with professionalism, creativity, and compassion. For that, I am sincerely grateful.

As we step into 2026, I am excited about the opportunities ahead for the College of Health & Human Services. This year will bring new students, new partnerships, and new ideas. My hope for the new Graduate Health Education Building in Saginaw is becoming a reality. We strive to bring new programs to the college to help provide more diverse opportunities for students. But with all that comes continued responsibility: to prepare graduates who are not only highly skilled, but also ethical, resilient, and committed to serving others. And especially now, the need for strong, thoughtful leaders in health care has never been greater as we navigate complex public health challenges, rapid technological advances, widening workforce shortages, and shifting expectations of what care should look like.

Our communities need leaders who can think critically, communicate with compassion, act ethically, and inspire others. When I look at this college, I see those future leaders—individuals ready to guide the health-care system forward with resilience, innovation, and heart. I know of no better group of people to support that mission than the faculty and staff in this college. Together, we will continue to:

- Support student success through high-quality teaching, mentoring, and advising.
- Strengthen our community and clinical partnerships.
- Advance our programs and accreditation efforts.
- Foster a culture of respect, collaboration, and well-being for all members of our college.

I also hope this year brings each of you time and space for your own growth—whether that is through scholarship, professional development, new projects, or simply reclaiming moments of balance and joy outside of work. Your well-being matters, and it is essential to our college's success. Thank you for the expertise, care, and heart you bring to HHS every day. I am honored to serve as your dean and to work alongside you as we begin 2026 together.

Wishing you and your loved ones a healthy, peaceful, and fulfilling New Year. I look forward to all we will accomplish in the months ahead.

*Happy
New Year!*

NEW MEMBER OF THE HHS FAMILY



Please join me in welcoming Amy Roy as a new faculty member in the Department of Nursing.

Amy has been a nurse for over 20 years. Most recently, Amy taught full-time since 2015 at Kirtland Community College. She has also been a clinical instructor for SVSU since 2008. For the past 3 ½ years, Amy has been the Director of Nursing at Kirtland Community College.

Amy is very passionate about nursing education. Her experience extends to cardiac step-down, home care, case management, clinical teaching, and simulation.

Welcome to SVSU!

KINESIOLOGY STUDENT HONORED



Bella M Hazen. Nominated by SVSU faculty, Bella was honored with the SHAPE-Michigan Student Honor Award – 2025. The Board of Directors for SHAPE-MI stated in their letter of recognition, The criterion for this award requires scholarship, professional and community service.

SHAPE-MI is proud to recognize your commitment to excellence. Bella received her award at the SHAPE-MI annual conference in Lansing, MI on November 6, 2025.

Bella states, “Life isn’t meant to be lived perfectly...but merely to be LIVED. Boldly, wildly, beautifully, uncertainly, imperfectly, magically LIVED.”

Congratulations on your accomplishments!

FACULTY/STAFF BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Cathy Macomber was appointed to the Advanced Standard Setting Panel of the ASWB (Association of Social Work Board). Cathy was selected from more than 1,700 applicants for a limited number of available positions. Congratulations Cathy!

Dr. Marcia Ditmyer was appointed to the Commission on Dental Accreditation as a public member commissioner effective July 2026 through 2030. Commissioners serve as the governing body, responsible for accrediting dental programs, setting policy, ensuring standards are met, and acting in the public’s best interest. Also, appointed as the Chair of the Disciplinary Sub-Committee for the Michigan Board of Nursing beginning January 2026.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Charlton N, Berry DC, Kannan V, et al. The use of expired resuscitation medications for life-threatening first aid conditions: a systematic search and narrative review. *Resuscitation Plus*, 2025, 26, 101110, 1-13.

Roberts JR, Motley R, McDowell M. How African American Men Cope with Race-Based Traumatic Stress: A Quantitative Study, *Social Work Research*, 2025, 49(4):213–221, <https://doi.org/10.1093/swr/svaf022>

Sanders, A. A., Roberts, J. D., McDowell, M. C., & Muller, A. (2024). The Consequences of Misdiagnosing Race-Based Trauma Response in Black Men: A Critical Examination. *Social Work in Public Health*, 39(7), 721–733. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2024.2380821>

Sanders, A. A. (Contributor). *Health, Parenting, and Community Perspectives on Black Fatherhood: Defying Stereotypes and Amplifying Strengths*. 2024; Lexington Books, New York, New York.

Dr. Becca Schlaff was one of two awardees for the Field-Spicer Fellowship Program with her application entitled ***Prenatal Care Promotion and Congenital Syphilis Public Health Messaging***.

HOLIDAY EVENTS IN HHS

In true HHS fashion, the holiday season was filled with creativity, connection, and a whole lot of fun. This year, our community went all out with a door-decorating contest, gingerbread house decorating, department tree decorating, and a food pantry collection challenge—each one showcasing the enthusiasm and generosity of our teams. We wrapped it all up, of course, with our always-anticipated potluck, bringing everyone together to celebrate the season.

Enjoy the photos from these events. [First the Gingerbread Decorating Contest...](#)



First Place



Second Place



Third Place

HOLIDAY EVENTS, Cont.

Door decorating contest...



First Place



Second Place



Third Place



Honorable Mention

1st: **Whoville, Sim Lab**
2nd: **Peanuts, Brandi D' Archangel**
3rd: **Memes, Judi Cox**
Honorable Mention: **Ted Lasso, Josh Ode**

HOLIDAY EVENTS, Cont.

Department Tree Decorating Contest

- 1st: **Kinesiology**
- 2nd: **Public Health and Health Sciences**
- 3rd: **Occupational Therapy**

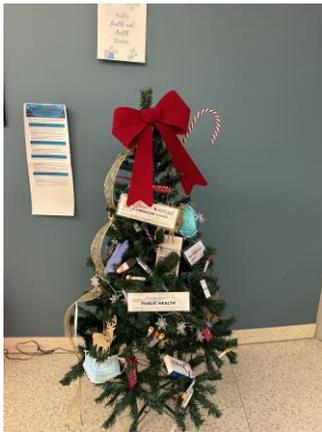
Most Food Donated to the SVSU Food Pantry

- 1st: **Kinesiology**
- 2nd: **Public Health and Health Sciences**
- 3rd: **Social Work**

As a college, we collected 317 items for the SVSU Food Pantry. That is an outstanding contribution to our students, and we appreciate everyone who donated.



First Place



Second Place



Third Place

Desert Bake-Off



First Place
Kelsey Lipinski



Second Place
Liz Martin



Third Place
Becky Toth

JINGLE BELL WALK

Another Jingle Bell walk...Over 100 participants walked in the second annual indoor Jingle Bell 5K on Wednesday, Dec. 3rd. Bachand Hall and Gilbertson Hall were decked out for the holiday event, which was coordinated by Gena Guerin's KINE 350 Exercise is Medicine students. Members of Cardinal Singers opened the event with holiday carols, and there was a special appearance by Santa and Buddy the Elf. Various student clubs decorated for the event, competing for prizes. The Pre-Physical Therapy Club took top honors, as judged by Lisa Krissoff Boehm, provost and vice president for academic and student affairs. Great job!



MEN'S HEALTH EVENT

Becky Church, MSHAL, Director for MyMichigan Health Foundation implemented the Men's Health Event at Vahalla's in Mt. Pleasant! The event was a direct result of her MSHAL capstone project.

The event welcomed over 50 guests, alongside our first- and second-year medical students. They were able to raised \$3,500 for the Men's Health Fund. Below is a group photo from the event.

First-year med students are in gray fleece; they're all from Southern Michigan. Second-year students are in burgundy, white, and black (left side and behind the CMU coaches). They're from California, Florida, and Michigan, and many plan to stay in Michigan after graduation. Men's Health Team includes Jennifer Marar, Staci Chroninger, Tom Albrecht (volunteer/advocate for men's health), Becky Church, 1st and 2nd year CMU Med Students.



NURSING MENTORS

The nursing simulation department hosted a Christmas Party last Friday for the student mentors. There are 6 student mentors that graduated. They had a potluck, games, a white elephant gift exchange, built the gingerbread house, and had some celebratory cake. What a great way to celebrate! The nursing mentors graduating include Katie Bicknell, Miriam Koltvedt, Jordan Goretski, Cari Grzegorek, Annie Joseff, Megan Plucinski. Congratulations to you all!



GRADUTATION – December 2025

Another great semester – ending in commencement and other graduation events.

BSN Symposium

The pinning ceremony is a unique and special ceremony for the nursing community. It is an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishment of becoming a nurse with family, friends and faculty. While graduation highlights the completion of academic study, the pinning ceremony marks the important transition from student to nurse. Below is a picture of the Class of 2025 and a picture of their amazing faculty and staff. Congratulations!



GRADUTATION – December 2025, Cont.

Graduate Hooding Ceremony

The hooding ceremony is oldest and most colorful academic traditions, originating in the 12th century and entering the United States in the 17th century. Over time, academic dress grew into a tradition that symbolized pride, achievement, and scholarly distinction. During the ceremony, faculty members place the hood over each graduate's head, signifying that they have completed all requirements of their program. The faculty's presence and participation serve as a reminder that no graduate achieves this milestone alone. Their guidance, encouragement, and belief in your potential have shaped their journey. This semester, we had folks from Occupational Therapy, Public Health, Nursing, Business, and Computer Science. On Saturday, we had the opportunity to hood 3 of our doctoral students (Doctor of Nursing Practice) at the main ceremony. Congratulations to all of our graduate students. We are so proud of all of you.



Once again, congratulations to our graduate students on this incredible milestone. We are so proud of all you have accomplished and the dedication, resilience, and passion you've shown along the way. We can't wait to see the impact you will make in your professions and communities.



So proud of our own Kailyn, Marielle, and Emily



GRADUTATION – December 2025, Cont.



FAREWELL TO BECKY TOTH



A fond farewell to Dr. Becky Toth who is retiring at the end of the fall semester.

As we celebrate your retirement, we want to express our deepest gratitude for the many years you have devoted to our students, your profession, and the College of Health and Human Services. You have been an extraordinary colleague, mentor, and educator, and a cherished member of the HHS family. Your commitment to nursing education and your care for students and colleagues alike have left a lasting legacy. While we will miss you greatly, we wish you a retirement filled with joy, health, and new adventures. Thank you for all you have given to HHS!

NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION

Submit any newsworthy items for the next edition of the HHS newsletter.

We are always looking for faculty and staff achievements, external funding, recent publications, and accepted presentations since the last newsletter, including those you have completed with students, research projects going on, creative activities, community service activities, and anyone special in the college (faculty, staff, or student) you would like to highlight.

To submit information, please send to mditmyer@svsu.edu

Deadline for 2nd Quarter of 2026 Newsletter is March 16, 2026.