

N O R T H W E S T E R N M I C H I G A N C O L L E G E

WHITE PINE PRESS

We hew to the line; let the chips fall where they may.



Women's History Month

Student Profile: Brittni Moore



Photo Credit/BRITTNI MOORE

Aidan Pool
Staff Writer

Maritime cadets come from many places. Some travel from as far as Louisiana or California. Some are local. However, one cadet has a particularly interesting background. Deck cadet Brittni Moore of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy (GLMA) started her journey to becoming a sailor in a very unexpected place.

“I graduated from film school in 2012 and was working as a camera assistant on TV shows and movies such as ‘The Walking Dead,’ ‘Anchorman 2,’ ‘Nurse Jackie,’ ‘Royal Pains,’ and ‘The Blacklist.’” said Moore. “I thought that my career would build towards working as a cinematographer, but I realized slowly as I worked more and more shows that I did not want to stay involved in that industry for the rest of my life.”

Hours in the film industry can be brutal and many workers find it hard to get enough sleep. Moore felt unfulfilled with her work but was unsure where to go or what else she could do.

On a whim, Moore applied for a trainee position on the tall ship, Barque Picton Castle. “I’d always thought that tall ships looked cool,” Moore said “I very specifically wanted to know what it felt like to be surrounded by nothing but water and the horizon.”

Her plan was simple: catch the ship in Charleston, stay on for three weeks as she sailed to Bermuda, and then Boston, and then take the train from Boston back to New York and

go back to film season five of ‘The Blacklist.’ “I had never been on a ship before and had no sailing experience. I didn’t even know if I was going to get seasick,” Moore said.

Similar to the industry that she came from, her first night aboard was filled with drama. “We sailed through a storm on our first night at sea after leaving Charleston on the way to Bermuda.” Moore was preparing for her midnight to 4 a.m. watch when it happened, “Lighting struck the ship as I was getting dressed for watch just before midnight, and when we came up on deck we all had to wear our rigging climbing harnesses and clip into the railing on the quarterdeck because the ship was rolling so heavily.” Most ships have enclosed bridges, where all of the navigation equipment and deck crew stand their watches, however in Moore’s case things were a little different, “on those traditional tall ships it’s not like you’re in an enclosed bridge, so we were all just outside in it.”

Moore loved the chaotic environment that maritime offered from the movement of the ship to the wildness of tides and currents. After the first storm, the weather cleared up, making room for some great scenery.



Photo Credit/BRITTNI MOORE

When the boat reached Bermuda, she had no doubt this was the change she was looking for. “I wound up calling my boss a month later from Canada to quit my job on The Blacklist, and then I stayed with that ship for almost two years.” Moore moved up the ladder throughout those two years reaching the highest unlicensed position aboard ship.

Upon completing the voyage in 2019, Moore decided she wanted to go a step further and go to school for her license. “I started researching all of the academies in detail, and that’s when I learned about GLMA for the first time.

It sounded almost too good to be true that there was an academy offering a deck officer license program with pilotage, that also happened to have a much more reasonable form of the regiment and was not prohibitively expensive.”

She has developed a reputation at GLMA for being a hard worker. When asked what drives her, Moore responded: “I would say that I am, in general, driven by a deep curiosity about the world, a desire to learn as much as I can about everything I can, and a fierce streak of stubborn competitiveness. Continually learning is one of the things that makes life exciting and interesting, and I’ve really just looked for every chance to learn as much as possible.”

What gave Moore her current reputation? She went out on a commercial sea project as a first-year student, worked as the cadet bosun, or boatswain (the most senior rate of the deck department responsible for the components of a ship’s hull) aboard the training ship last summer, led the Women on the Water student group last year, and spent as much time as possible on the small boats and the tugboat practicing ship handling skills.

“I’ve tried to deliberately do things that make me a little bit uncomfortable and push myself in as many different aspects of the program as possible, and I feel like I’ve gotten so much more out of my time here at GLMA because of it,” she said.

Moore is the only deck cadet in her class to pass every single licensing exam, going 39 for 39. When asked how she did it, Moore gave one simple response, “Anything can seem impossible until somebody does it.”

Moore faces a lifelong challenge in her career, as she is part of a small percentage of women in the maritime industry. “I think that my experience working in male-dominated fields is an experience familiar to women all over the world—you very often have to do twice as much work for half the credit in the hope of being recognized at the same level of competency as your male peers. Very often, we are simply tolerated until we make them feel inadequate. It is, frankly, exhausting. I would love to just be seen as a sailor, and not hear yet again about how I’m doing a good job ‘for a woman.’”

Moore refuses to let it get to her though, adding, “My experience has been that women are reminded over and over again, even if it’s not intended maliciously, that they are the outsiders. It takes a toll. That’s just the truth of it. But I love what I do, and I’ve been lucky to find some incredibly supportive friends and mentors who are actively working to improve this aspect of the maritime industry.”

Moore looks at herself as just another sailor. She shows appreciation for all of the women that have persevered to make this possible for her.

“Women have been sailing for as long as there have been ships on the sea, and so many women before me had much higher obstacles to overcome. I just hope I can do the same in at least some small way for the sailors who come after me. The sea and the lakes belong to us all.”

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Community Officer Positions Help Combat Homelessness

Sara Bagley The Traverse City Police Department Staff Writer (TCPD) created two new positions last October with funds from the federal Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) grant. Officer Justin Nowland, who has served with TCPD for the past five years, was named the North Boardman community officer and local social worker Jennifer Campbell joined the department as Nowland's partner.

The goal of these new positions was to "reduce calls for law enforcement related to vulnerable positions, and

What Is Changing and Why?

there's an aspect of treatment that's added," Campbell explained. "We're helping people not in the moment, but the long-term follow up of how to get them out of the cycle." The position focuses on helping with homelessness and the unhoused population, but the issue is often compounded with substance abuse and addiction.

The new positions use a prevention-based approach, much like other specialty teams the TCPD has, like the crisis intervention team (CIT), introduced in 2018, that focuses on mental health crises.

The initial process following an emergency call is still the same, but it has added one more step—treatment. "Our response doesn't change," Officer Nowland said. "We want to address and try to find solutions to long-term problems." After the initial TCPD response, Campbell tries to meet with the person in crisis in order to figure out what resources they need, both in an effort to provide help and stability to the person and to reduce the workload and resources needed from first responders.

Public Perception

Whenever new initiatives are launched, it can be difficult to measure how the public may react. "Everyone has opinions," Officer Nowland said. "I focus less on what people think, and more on helping people that I can."

Campbell has witnessed pushback on her type of position as well. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has openly expressed disagreement with having social workers embedded in law enforcement agencies, noting the differences in ethics and public service roles between police and social workers.

"It's very polarized," Campbell said. "I think if you talk with the people we've helped, they have positive responses."

In the short time that these positions have been active, it's difficult to measure the results. "I can't get out a line graph and show you depreciation of calls," Officer Nowland said. "Everything is still new. Hopefully, we can eventually show that data." Despite that, he would still say that these efforts have been worth it. "Have we identified and been able to help people? Yes. If you help one person, that's a success to me."

As a citizen born and raised in Traverse City, Campbell noted the importance of creating a culture of community support, saying that there have been people who have reached out directly to Officer Nowland to find out how to get into treatment.

"There's this trust with communities that are hard to reach," Campbell said. "The culture is changing. It's a beautiful thing."

The Future

Changes are not just being made in the Traverse City area, but also in the training of future police officers at NMC. Gail Kurowski, director of NMC's Police Academy noted that an "increase in training hours for responding to persons with behavioral issues was approved." The increase of training hours in question is dedicated to Behavioral Health Emergency Partnership Training, or BHEP, and was approved on Feb. 8. The Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) also released a training module specifically addressing situations that involve mental and developmental disorders.

According to the module detail document, "training should target the officer's ability to observe, and subsequently interpret behavioral cues for an effective response and intervention." The module is taught by instructors that fit within a strict criteria; instructors must either have had experience and expertise in law enforcement responses to those with mental health disorders or be practitioners and clinicians with backgrounds in mental health services. Director Kurowski shares that the increase in training hours "will take effect this fall when we begin our next academy session."

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The Women who Feed Traverse City

“I think I was drawn to cooking and hospitality because it’s the ultimate form of love and connection to me”

- Emily Stewart

Gabbi Chavarria
Editor in Chief

Traverse City is home to a bustling restaurant scene that thrives year-round, even in the cold, gray winter. At the heart of that scene are kitchens where chefs, servers, and bartenders work to provide our community with unique and delicious food and beverages.

Unlike many major cities, Traverse City is host to a wide variety of female chefs and chef/owners in some of the highest end restaurants in town. Emily Stewart the co chef-owner of Modern Bird, Jennifer Blakeslee the co chef-owner of The Cooks’ House, and Elise Curtis-Dull the Chef de Cuisine at Trattoria Stella are just a few of the women working behind the line to feed the city.

“I think I was drawn to cooking and hospitality because it’s the ultimate form of love and connection to me,” said Emily Stewart, who co-owns Modern Bird on 541 W. Front St. with her husband Andy Elliot. The couple moved to Traverse City in 2018 after spending 13 years cooking in Chicago. Stewart grew up in Kalamazoo, Mich. and started working in restaurants at 14 years old. After finishing college, she decided to go to culinary school to pursue her passion for cooking and food. “Sharing a meal together can be healing and fulfilling in ways nothing else is to me,” Stewart said.



Photo Credit/GABBI CHAVARRIA

Emily Stewart, co Chef-Owner of Modern Bird with their famous cheese bread



Photo Credit/Trattoria Stella

Elise Curtis-Dull, Chef de Cuisine at Trattoria Stella

A Kitchen for Everyone

Elise Curtis-Dull, Chef de Cuisine and Head Pastry Chef at Trattoria Stella, has spent nearly her whole life in one of Traverse City’s most successful kitchens. Curtis-Dull got a job at Trattoria Stella (830 Cottageview Dr.) in 2007 and worked her way from the front of house as a host and food-runner to the back of house starting in the pantry position in the kitchen. She soon worked her way up to the pasta position, then the sautee position. “This is where I learned that creating food was not only a job, but a true art form,” Curtis-Dull said. She comes by her skill in the hospitality industry naturally; both of her parents worked as servers and bartenders when she was a child. “Food has always been a central point in my life,” she said. “Every major life event or family gathering always involves coming together to enjoy a big meal.”

“...Creating food [is] not only a job, but a true art form.”

- Elise Curtis-Dull

How Far We've Come



Jennifer Blakeslee, co-Chef-Owner of The Cooks' House.

"You have to work a little harder."
-Jennifer Blakeslee

Jennifer Blakeslee, who co-owns The Cooks' House at 115 Wellington St. with fellow chef Eric Patterson, fell into her role as a chef. "Cooking found me," she said.

Blakeslee grew up in Traverse City. She had been a dancer and lived all over the country before moving to Denver where she got her first job in a kitchen—head chef of a new Italian restaurant. "My friends [Tom and Marna Sumners] wanted to open a restaurant and they asked me if I knew anyone who knew how to make pasta. I said 'I know how to make pasta,' and that turned into me writing the menu and helping them open."

Blakeslee was around 30 years old when she took her first job in the kitchen. "It was completely different from everything else."

Stewart, Blakeslee, and Curtis-Dull have all worked tremendously hard to make their way in the culinary world. "I have often been the only woman in the kitchen," Curtis-Dull said, adding "It took me twice as long to move up as it did for guys who started at the same time as me."

"I think any kitchen or hospitality

related job is still pretty male dominated, or at least perceived to be that way," said Stewart. She spent around eight years in kitchens working on the line where she noticed that "sometimes the loudest voices get mistaken for the most powerful, but in my experience, working in women-dominated kitchens have been the highlights of my career."

Blakeslee has also noticed the disparity between men and women behind the line. "You have to work a little harder," she said. "I've been extremely fortunate to work with amazing men and mentors, but yeah. I'm usually the only woman in the kitchen."

These women not only put in work on the line, but they also work to effectively run and operate their businesses and kitchens. "I think being a woman informs my choices as a business owner because I'm able to balance a lot all at once. That's a necessity in restaurants," said Stewart. For her, the most important thing she can do as a business owner is to make a career in hospitality accessible and liveable. "I want to create a place where careers can continue and thrive for anyone, even if that person chooses to have children or wants to travel the world or has eight dogs at home. Whatever life looks like, I think it's important to be able to live it while balancing work."

For Blakeslee, her experience as a woman and as a mother helps her remain patient and open. "I think it's my responsibility as a chef and owner to help people find what they're good at," she said, adding "I do what I do. I have a lot of expectations and some people say they're impossible to meet, but I disagree." Her crew, who she described as "really on board and up for the challenge," has been proving her right since The Cooks' House opened in 2008.

Restaurants, especially behind the scenes, can be grueling work. Long hours of standing over hot stoves feeding the masses mixed with the meticulous cleaning and prepping can make for an unforgiving work environment. Instead, Curtis-Dull chooses to run the kitchen kindly. "I have noticed that as a woman, I tend

to manage with more patience and empathy," she said. "I don't expect my team to do anything I'm not willing to do myself. I lead with gratitude and support rather than dictation and disrespect." The positive reinforcement pays off. Trattoria Stella is regularly rated one of the best restaurants in Northern Michigan, and the restaurant was invited to host a dinner at the James Beard house in New York City in 2010.

While these women owe their careers and successes to themselves, they've been able to conquer the kitchen with support from friends and family. "My parents both showed me how to work incredibly hard to create the life you want to live and be proud of living," said Stewart. "Pat Evans of Crocodile Palace, he was the chef who developed the pasta program and he taught me so much," said Curtis-Dull, who also credited Myles Anton, head chef and part-owner of Trattoria Stella. "He showed me that food could be art and has believed in my abilities even when I didn't." Blakeslee credits chefs like Andre Rochat (of Michelin Star restaurant Andre's French Restaurant in Las Vegas) and Tom Sumner (co-owner of Trattoria Stella in Denver, Colo. where Blakeslee got her start—no relation to Curtis-Dull's Trattoria Stella here in Traverse City) among others for their support and mentorship. "To have someone believe in you like that is such a gift," she said.

"I'm proud of how far I've come," said Curtis-Dull. She hopes the work she has done over the years can help to make it easier for the next generation of female chefs to move up in the industry. "It's a pretty amazing life," said Blakeslee. Stewart agreed, noting that being in Traverse City among so many female chefs and hospitality professionals has allowed her to choose who she surrounds herself with.

Trattoria Stella, Modern Bird, and The Cooks' House have all earned a reputation for delicious food and are just a few of the fine dining establishments that make Traverse City a food hub in Northern Michigan.

With these three talented female chefs holding spots at the helms of their restaurants, we can continue to expect the exceptional.

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Indigenous Writers Flip the Script

Sara Bagley
Staff Writer

“Words are powerful, and as a journalist, I’ve come to understand the words I write in regard to Anishinaabe people matter,” said Sierra Clark, a local Indigenous journalist for Report for America. “The history matters, the contemporary lives of Anishinaabe people matter.”

Angeline Boulley is also increasing the visibility of Indigenous communities with her work in fiction. Boulley wrote *Firekeeper’s Daughter*, a story centered around



an Ojibwe teen girl and described her book as “Indigenous Nancy Drew mixed with ‘21 Jump Street.’” She found a bestseller on her hands when she published it in 2021.

When she read *Firekeeper’s Daughter* Clark was thrilled. “It spread like fire. It was an auntie that came from our community. For her to climb to being a bestseller, there was so much excitement in the community to see that representation.”

“I wanted to write the novel I wish I could’ve read when I was a teen,” Boulley said. She grew up in New Buffalo, Mich., at a distance from her tribal community of the Sault Ste Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians. Boulley was a senior in high school before she ever read a book with a Native main character. Even then, she felt that the book contained problematic representation and stereotypes.

“If all you see is the casinos, you have society viewing us that way,” said Clark. “As an Odawa Anishinaabe, we are more than that. There is so much that gets glossed over when you just hear about casinos and doom and gloom.”

Clark, who is contracted through Report for America to work with the *Traverse City Record-Eagle*, fell into journalism unexpectedly in 2020. “I didn’t really respect or like the idea of journalism,” Clark said. “I was literally thrown into journalism with no background in it in the height of the pandemic. It came down to a need for representation.” The *Record-Eagle* collaborated with the organization Indigenizing the News to create the Mishigamiing Journalism Project. Through this program, the *Record-Eagle* hired Indigenous women to report on regional Indigenous news stories.

Since beginning her career in journalism, Clark has spoken at a number of universities about Indigenous journalism, what it is, and how the history of journalism has often perpetuated stereotypes of Indigenous people. “I found a niche in going against the grain; I want to challenge how we talk about it,” Clark said that she “would love it if other newsrooms would take the time and decency to follow the *Record-Eagle*. They’ve taken time and dedication to making a safe place for Indigenous people.”

Clark said that she has seen an uptick in coverage of stories pertaining to Native American communities in the region, but that she’s still seen a lot of mixed reactions. “I do get a lot of positive feedback from people reading and people in the community [and also] people saying I’m creating problems when there aren’t any,” she said. “I know my job is important because the people in my community think it is.” She mentioned that her stories on Indigenous happenings, including a profile series titled “Indigenous Neighbors,” have helped her community feel seen, heard and represented in local media. “I’d love to see more Indigenous journalists,” she said.

Creative writing and storytelling are a part of Anishinaabe culture. “It makes sense to me that I’d write a book with accurate representation,” said Boulley, who can relate to Daunis, the main character in *Firekeeper’s Daughter*. Both have an Ojibwe father, a non-native mother, and an unsupportive grandmother. “There was a feeling like you didn’t fit on or off the reservation,” Boulley said.

“I don’t know how many times I cried reading that book,” said Clark in regards to Boulley’s *Firekeeper’s Daughter*. “It brought me so much joy to think of all the young Indigenous people who have read it to have that representation. I didn’t have that.”

Boulley was confident she would get published, and that it would resonate with people, but she never expected *Firekeeper’s Daughter* to go as far as it did. “My book



Sierra Clark

Photo Via/RECORD EAGLE

was both a commercial and literary success. To see a book like mine about a very specific community be a success, I think they realized our stories are marketable. It helps publishers take a chance on other native authors.”

While accurate and positive representation in media and literature is essential for Indigenous youth, Boulley pointed out that it serves two additional purposes for everyone else. “It helps to improve awareness and understanding. There are lots of misconceptions about being Indigenous. Stories with accurate representation give more for people to learn from.” To her, the most important of Indigenous representation in the media is “seeing it and acknowledging that we belong in the world too. We still exist and live and have all these great stories. I don’t know which is worse, an inaccurate representation or a complete lack.”

Boulley is working on a second novel titled *Warrior Girl Unearthed*, which will be published on May 2. Clark’s work can be found on *Traverse City’s Record-Eagle’s* website or in print.

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Yarrow Brown on Motherhood and Housing

Gabbi Chavarria
Editor in Chief

John Osmond
Staff Writer

“I enjoy a good challenge, and housing is something that is a huge opportunity and challenge in our community,” said Yarrow Brown, the executive director for Housing North, a non-profit organization that seeks to solve the housing crisis in Northwest Michigan. A Jan. 22, 2022 *Northern Express* article reported a 10% increase in the homeless population from 2021 to 2022. Those most affected are the asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) and homeless populations, but the rising costs of housing has impacted every level of income.

Brown grew up in Menominee County in the Upper Peninsula. She first moved to Traverse City in 2008 and worked at the Leelanau Conservancy doing water quality testing, watershed planning, strategic planning, and mapping. “I immediately fell in love with the region and feel grateful every day to live here.”

Brown said her strong personality has brought a lot to her career, and that her “ambiguous” name, Yarrow, “has worked to [her] advantage and has at least gotten [her] in the door for opportunities.”

More than anything, Brown identifies as a mother. “I think balancing being a mom and full time professional is intense, but also really fulfilling,” she said, adding “I enjoy balancing my work life with my home life and feel it makes me a stronger and better professional and parent.”

Brown applied for the Executive Director position at Housing North in the spring of 2020. “I have always wanted to take the tools in land protection and apply them to housing including growing and expanding the community land trust model,” she said. The community land trust (CLT) model is a form of shared equity ownership where public and private investors can purchase land on behalf of a specific community that the CLT owns in perpetuity. Brown was enthusiastic about tackling the housing crisis challenge. “I knew I could help or at least take a part in moving the needle on bringing more housing to our region and help removing some of the key barriers to housing through communications and advocacy,” she said.

Sarah Lucas, Housing North’s founding executive director, laid out an inspirational path for Brown to follow. “I always admired her professionalism and was confident she had built a strong organization that would allow me to continue the important work at Housing North.” Outside of her organization, Brown said she draws inspiration from her parents who taught her about the work-life balance required to be a mother with a career.

Brown stated that the housing crisis currently affecting Traverse City is a multi-faceted issue without a one-size-fits-all solution, but that if she had to nail down the biggest challenge it would be having access to the “capacity or resources including technical support to guide our communities to create more housing and remove barriers.”

In order to pay for new housing units, the city would need to “support-tax abatements, reduced land cost, grants, low interest loans, and more.”

There are some who are not in favor of the housing initiative. Critics are not supportive of this plan as it would require higher taxes and more developments in Traverse City. “Our job at Housing North is to help train [affordable housing] advocates and connect people with the resources to speak about housing and investing in housing in our communities that is not divisive and can help create positive change,” said Brown. She was clear that it wasn’t simply about allowing developers to build more, but “finding ways to bring in the development we need to allow our community to thrive. Without creative partnerships and providing some incentives, this is not going to happen.”

Regardless of politics, Brown approaches her work with remarkable enthusiasm and passion. She has been a firm supporter in bettering the community and solving problems through the lens of a mother who genuinely cares about housing equity for all. “I want to say that while we have made a lot of progress over the last few hundred years for equality in the workplace, there is still a long way to go for everyone to be treated equally, not just women.”



Photo Credit/HOUSING NORTH Yarrow Brown, executive director of Housing North.

A *Northern Express* article reported a 10% increase in the homeless population from 2021 to 2022

Housing North’s active regional projects

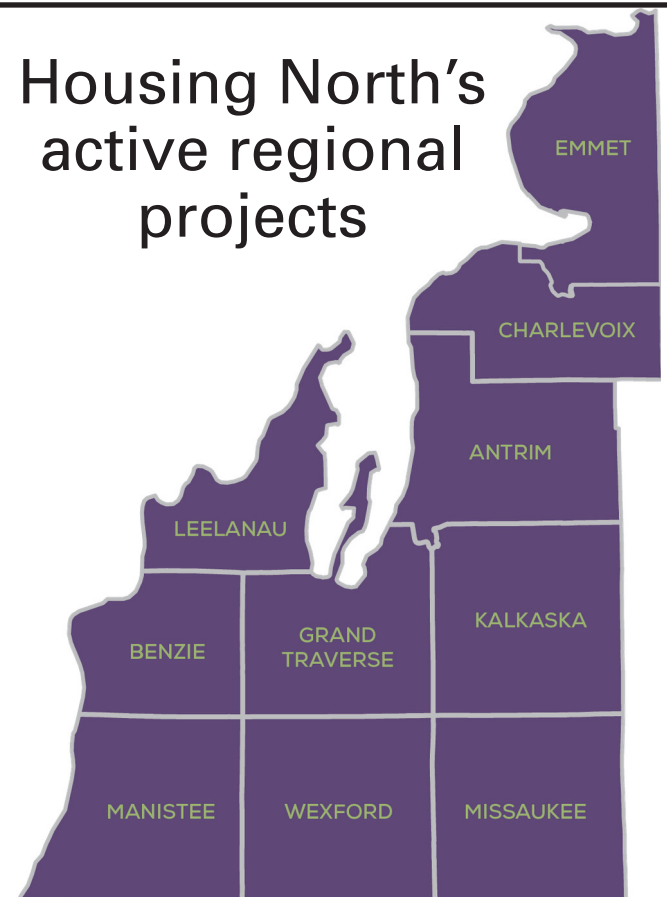


Photo Credit/HOUSING NORTH

Housing North

- Focuses on legislative change
- Provides resources to local organizations
- Notable partners
 - Goodwill, Cherry Republic, Habitat for Humanity

Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better

Aidan Pool
Staff Writer

In 1920, the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote, widely considered the first step towards gender equality, was ratified. Yet, over a century later there is still gender inequality in the United States. In male dominated fields, such as maritime,

construction, and athletics, it is particularly obvious. Throughout the last century, it has been proven time and time again that anything a man can do, a woman can do just as well.

In 1943, there was an unexpected emergence—women began to play professional baseball.

Many male athletes were overseas fighting in World War II, but those that remained at home craved the same entertainment that they had before the war. Initially, the plan was to have women play in Major League parks but when the league was first formed, many ballpark owners did not want the women to play. It was decided that four non-major league parks close to the league headquarters in Chicago would be used. Teams were established in Racine and Kenosha, Wisconsin, Rockford, Illinois, and South Bend, Indiana.

The first year of the league turned out to be a successful one with more than 176,000 fans attending 108 games. Attendance reached more than 450,000 in 1945 after the war ended and reached a peak of 910,000 fans in 1948 with 10 teams in the league. The women were paid \$85 a week, which, adjusted for inflation, is equal to \$1,470 a week today. The establishment of the league was memorialized in the 1992 film, *A League of Their Own*.

In February of 1966, 23-year old, Roberta Gibb (also called Bobbi) was denied entry in the Boston Marathon. “This is an AAU Men’s Division race only,” wrote race director Will Cloney. “Women aren’t allowed, and furthermore are not physiologically able.”

Gibb became interested in running while watching the 1964 race, after which she began training. She was not able to participate in the marathon despite devoting herself to training for the marathon for two years.

In response, Gibb didn’t make a statement—she made a scene.

The day of the race, Gibb jogged around town for a bit before hiding in some bushes by the starting line. After the race began, she slipped into the pack. The runners noticed quickly, and Gibb stated in an interview with Roy Wallock that “The men loved the fact that I was running. They were very protective and encouraging.”

Gibb finished the race at 3 hours, 21 minutes, and 40 seconds. Her time was 13 minutes ahead of the time required to qualify, proving women were as physiologically capable as men to run long distances. The Governor of Massachusetts at the time, John A. Volpe met her at the finish line to shake her hand.

Gibb paved the way for Kathy Switzer, another female runner determined to race.

A year after Gibb became an icon, Switzer took her own step by registering for the Boston Marathon as a man using her first and middle initials. Switzer received a number and became the first woman to officially run. Switzer enraged race co-director Jock Semple who tried to physically remove her from the race. Switzer finished an hour behind Gibb in that race, despite being restrained and pushed around.

The Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA) was founded in 1996.

The league initially saw great success and had a good business plan that utilized basketball-hungry markets such as Houston, Los Angeles, and New York with fans eager to tune in to



Switzer at the 1967 Boston Marathon, Pursued by Semple

Photo Via/KATHERINESWITZER.COM

see more of their cities’ teams win. The men’s league, the National Basketball Association (NBA), supported the WNBA.

The WNBA saw icons such as, Sheryl Swoops, Lisa Leslie, Cynthia Cooper, Becky Hammon, and Sue Bird excel at the sport. Hammon became much more than a player. After retiring she became the first full-time female assistant head coach in NBA history. Past and present players regard her time on the San Antonio Spurs staff fondly. The Las Vegas Aces hired her as head coach in 2022.

In 2020, Sarah Fuller became the first woman to play in a Power Five football game. The Power Five consists of the main five conferences in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for football. The NCAA includes the Southeastern Conference (SEC), the Big Ten, the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), the Big Twelve, and the Pacific 12 Conference (PAC-12).

Fuller was playing on the soccer team at Vanderbilt University at the time as the starting goalkeeper. After winning the SEC championship in soccer, she was kicking for the football team. Fuller ended her college football career 2-2.

There have been many female athletes that push for change in the world, succeed in their field, and inspire the younger generation. As we continue to see change throughout the sporting landscape, a future without separate male and female sporting events might not be far off.

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Family experience, passion to make an impact drives GVSU student to master’s degree program

Michele Coffill
Grand Valley State University

Justin Smith’s decision to pursue a career as a physician assistant was partly driven by the experiences his grandparents had by living in a rural community.

Smith is completing his first year as a graduate student in Grand Valley’s Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program in Traverse City through the University Center at Northwestern Michigan College.

The university’s PAS program opened a satellite location in Traverse City to provide a solution to the lack of health care practitioners in northern Michigan.

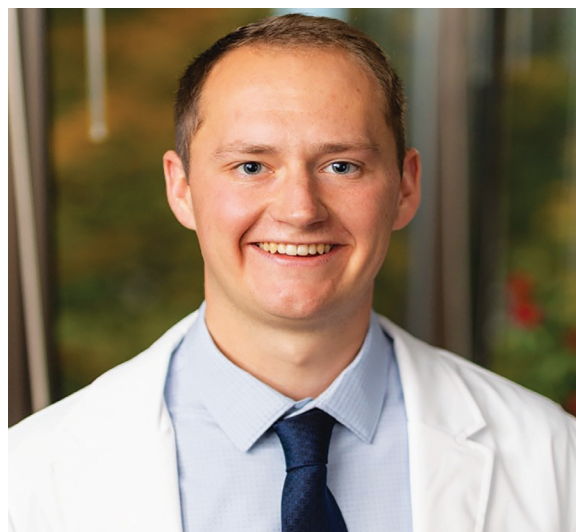
Smith’s grandparents live 40 minutes outside Cadillac. “They were not close to any health care and I think they missed out on a lot of preventive care that could have done them some good,” Smith said. “And there certainly are a lot fewer specialists in rural areas; people from Cadillac need to drive to Traverse City for appointments.”

Smith has always had a passion for science and for making an impact within his community. Those passions and his family’s experience propelled him to study allied health sciences at GVSU. “I knew I wanted to do something in health care: nursing, physical therapy or physician assistant studies,” he said.

Joining Grand Valley’s Pre-PA Club helped solidify

his career aspirations. The student organization offers social and academic resources; Smith said the club provided a lot of help when it was time to fill out applications for PA programs.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in allied health sciences this past April and started the PAS program that fall.



Justin Smith’s passion for science lead him to GVSU’s PAS program.

“It was really the best decision to come here for PA school,” said Smith, a native of Cadillac who now lives in Traverse City. “I get to stay in northern Michigan, where I want to practice.”

The Traverse City PAS cohort is small, allowing for lots of interactions with faculty members while maintaining connections with the cohort at GVSU’s Health Campus.

“Not only do we get a lot of contact with the faculty members, because the class is small, you really get to know your classmates well,” he said.

GVSU Physician Assistant Studies in Traverse City

GVSU opened its satellite PAS program in Traverse City in 2015 to educate students who want to stay in northern Michigan and provide patient care. Since that program began, more than 70 percent of students who earn PAS degrees work in the area.

The PAS program has an articulation agreement with NMC that grants preferred admission to the program at the Traverse City Center for two qualified NMC students who meet admission criteria. Learn more about programs and pathways from NMC at gvsu.edu/tcprograms.