When asked why he had come, Bill responded: “I went to a health fair at a church, and they took my blood pressure. Suddenly, there were a lot of people around me urging me to go to see a doctor because my blood pressure was so high. They told me it was 265 over 150-something. Well, I am afraid of doctors, so it took me a few days to get the courage to go to a clinic to have my blood pressure checked and treated. When I did, I was told that the soonest I could be seen was nearly a month away. I don’t know what my face looked like when I walked out of that clinic, but a woman came up to me and said, ‘Are you all right, sir?’ I said, ‘No, I am not,’ and I told her my story. She said to get in my car and drive west down Leonard to a place called Oasis of Hope Center and that they would help me.” Since that time, Bill has been a regular patient of the Center, and today, his blood pressure is back to normal, his overall health is stabilized, and he is beginning to take ownership of his own well-being.

That is just one of thousands of stories that serve to describe the Oasis of Hope Center (OHC), a free medical clinic located on W. Leonard Street in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The OHC lives up to its name by offering help, health and hope since April of 2007.

Upon very thorough review of the more than 1,000 page Self-Study developed by Kuyper College’s social work program faculty members Judi Ravenhorst-Meerman and Greg Scott, a site visit and other significant data, the Council on Social Work Education gave its highest affirmation for Kuyper’s social work program—a vote to reaffirm the program’s accreditation for an additional eight years.

The Council on Social Work Education—composed of a partnership of educational and professional institutions, social welfare agencies and private citizens—is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in this country.

According to Professor Scott, Kuyper’s social work program director, the affirmation from CSWE is gratifying. “It recognizes the quality and continuous growth of our program and the major role our graduates play in bringing a biblical worldview to the work to which they’ve been called,” he said.
At Kuyper College we have the unique—and exciting—opportunity to interact with people who are sensitive to God’s call, sensitive to opportunities for ministry or service, and sensitive to inner re-formation. Of the characteristics that distinguish us from sister institutions, it is these that energize and motivate me the most about being here—sensitivity to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in and about the individual and throughout the community.

Sensitivity is evidence of a teachable spirit, and thus, we feel blessed to work with such open and caring students in the classroom and throughout campus life. The accounts shared in this newsletter move me deeply as I note how sincerely students have been looking for their place in the world and how blessed they feel when they know they are called into Kingdom work. I hope that you are encouraged too as you read not only of the young people coming to Kuyper because of their God-given call but also that He is touching the hearts of older folks who refocus their lives in a more specific way on ministry and service. There are many challenges and spiritual battles we see in the world around us, but rejoice that there is a new generation of faithful witnesses going forth!

Sensitivity is also evidence of a theological and practical mindset characterized by grace. The students who come to Kuyper College belong here because God has already given them a spirit that resonates with “bringing God’s grace into today’s culture”—our key positioning statement that is seen in all of our publicity. This is not just a slogan to us, meant to be a catchy phrase to sell the College—it is the very essence, the truth of who we are and what we strive to do and teach. We are blessed that we can begin with students who already long to know how they can best bring this grace into the lives of others and thus bring reformation into the world.

Sensitivity is further evidenced in the fact that you are reading this newsletter: You care enough about what God has done and is doing through the mission of Kuyper College to learn more fully what our impact on students and others is. I am truly encouraged by that! The encouragement, support and prayers you extend for the College and the joy you add to our service are a big part of what is making us even more effective today: Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints – Philemon 1.7.

Thank you for that blessing!

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President

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The world of Islam—two hours from Grand Rapids

Nothing in their upbringing prepared Sarah Lindberg and Sarah Dickinson for their internship in Dearborn, Michigan, a city of about 100,000 and where one-third of the population is Arab. Both are members of the class of 2010 and are cross-cultural studies majors with certificates in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL). For one semester they ventured into a foreign world a short distance from the Kuyper College campus. “The Arabic-speaking community and culture in Dearborn is so all-encompassing that it was like being in another country,” said Dickinson. Lindberg agreed. “When I first got there, I remember sitting at a restaurant with Sarah and thinking, ‘Wow, this is the first time in my life when I feel like a minority.’ The program on TV was in Arabic, as were the signs and the language the people were speaking,” she said. “Never before did I feel so unlike everyone else in the United States. It was my home, but it wasn’t my home.”

Lindberg, born in Arizona, was raised in a Christian home together with her two brothers and one sister. “It’s wonderful having grown up in a loving Christian home where both my parents and all my siblings are believers in the Lord Jesus,” she said. “My parents’ example of self-sacrifice is incredible, and by it I have seen more of the love of Christ.” Lindberg was also quite involved in her church, Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church in Tucson, where she worked in the nursery, taught Sunday school, mentored younger girls, and served on the missions committee.

Dickinson was born in Maine, next to last in a family of seven brothers and sisters. Her father is a minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. According to Dickinson, her parents taught her how to pray and how to seek the Lord through the Scriptures. “These two things are the most wonderful things I was ever taught while
A summer of service and answered prayers

Michelle Norquist  
Associate Director of Library Services

The summer of 2009 was an amazing time to be serving students in the Kuyper College Zondervan Library. Serving students? Isn’t it quiet on campus in the summer…and especially at the Library? And wasn’t the Library closed to the public? Yes it was, but God was at work through the hands of both the few and the many.

The Library undertook the large project of reclassifying all materials from the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system to the Library of Congress (LCC) classification system. This was no small task, and it was entered into only after thorough research, many proposals and fervent prayers. Over 50,000 materials were handled by a staff of four library employees.

The main reason for undertaking this project was to further assist and equip students as they research and study in their chosen fields of ministry. The LCC system is the national standard for college and academic libraries. The Library’s collection is now standardized in relation to peer institutions. This may facilitate collaboration for future endeavors of benefit to the students and College.

A blessing throughout the entire project was the gathering for prayer every morning. God drew us together as a team that prayed for each other and worked diligently toward the goal of having the collection ready for students when they arrived on campus in the fall! Many times we were humbled and amazed by God’s provision.

One morning, while feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, someone knocked on the Library door as we were praying. It was a volunteer who asked, “Could you use some help?” I had never mentioned needing help, and we had never worked together before. What an answer to prayer. God does knock on doors!

Another time I verbalized a “not-so-secret desire of my heart” prayer request to the team as we were leaving for the evening. I briefly forgot about it, but God did not. The next morning I walked in with the exact person who could facilitate this request, unknown to her and her family. Coincidence? I know it is not. God always provided—the big and the small, the unspoken and the spoken. His hand guided this project and team.

“IN MY WORDS” is a feature of The Kuyper College News highlighting first-person stories by Kuyper College faculty and staff.

Seven habits of a highly effective steward

Much has been written about the habits of a highly effective person. Since stewardship is part of being a highly effective Christian, we hope that these habits will help us reflect on this area of our Christian life.

Habit 1: Be thankful: Do we thank God for the blessings of life—food and shelter, family and friends, good health, our jobs? A steward’s heart is a thankful heart.

Habit 2: Trust God to provide: When it comes to putting food on the table or making the mortgage payment, many of us believe we are on our own. As a result, we often worry and experience anxiety. We need to trust in God and believe our needs will be met according to His plan.

Habit 3: Be content: Even though we have many things, none of them actually belong to us. As we come to understand and recognize that everything belongs to God, our perspective changes, and we become more content.

Habit 4: Be a faithful example: Parents who tithe, save, live on a budget, minimize debt, and give of their abilities and time to help others set an excellent example for their children.

Habit 5: Live within your means: As God’s stewards, our lifestyle choice is to concentrate on what we have instead of what we lack. Debt is a terrible trap to fall into and an even harder one to escape.

Habit 6: Give time and talent: One of the greatest gifts we can give is the gift of self to build up the kingdom of God in our families, communities and churches.

Habit 7: Give treasure: Do we really love God more than money? Everything we have is a gift from God. If we are grateful Christians, we will be giving Christians.

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For more information, please contact Ken Capiscioltto at 616.988.3676 or e-mail kcapiscioltto@kuyper.edu.

Kuyper College is unable to provide tax advice regarding donations. We recommend you contact your tax consultant with any questions regarding your specific situation.
This Christian-based facility, founded by Barbara and Dan Grinwis, class of 1990, provides free or low-cost medical care to residents in need on the northwest side of Grand Rapids.

According to Dan, the lives that have been impacted by OHC’s presence are really known only by God. “We open our doors and offer our services in Jesus’ name, and continue to be a missionary outreach in the core of the city as we believe God is directing us,” said Dan. He added, that one of his most important memories of his mother is that, while she always had a part-time job during those years, he cannot recall a day when she was not at home to greet him when he came home from school.

“Our lives as kids revolved around our immediate family, our extended family, our circle of friends from Christian school, our CRC church, Sunday school, Catechism class, Cadets and Young Calvinist meetings,” said Dan. “However, although I grew up with an awareness of my heavenly Father as Lord, Master and King, I would describe my coming to Christ as a process.” Dan relates that, as a young person, he never questioned that he was a Christian, but he really did not know what that meant. It wasn’t until the middle of his high school years that an awakening of his faith began to take hold.

After graduation from high school Dan enrolled at a local community college. Soon after, during a Memorial Day beach excursion, he met Barbara. He explained: “She was on the beach with a friend to watch the sunset when, according to her, 30 or so kids piled down from the top of the dune down to the beach. At the end of the line was a quiet, introverted, lanky boy with a guitar slung across his back.” Dan invited Barbara and her friend to join them around their bonfire where they were playing music and singing songs. “A year later, at the age of 19, we were married,” said Dan.

While working full time, Dan continued to attend classes at the community college. As his family grew, he left school to concentrate on work and his family, which had grown to include three sons—Brandan, Ryan and Kevan.

When Dan and Barbara decided to move to Grand Rapids, they were introduced by friends to a group of people just forming into what eventually became the Church of the Servant (COS) CRC. “Barbara and I were among the first young people making public profession of faith there, and Brandan, our oldest, was in the first group to be baptized,” said Dan. According to Dan, this was an important crossroad in his life. He explained: “COS has a strong emphasis on total participation. That became my initiation into a concept I would call the act of serving and ministering to the Body of Christ—the lesson that salvation fosters service, and service deepens one’s love for the Body.”

It was some time later, after the family had moved to the country and was an active part of a small RCA congregation that, according to Dan, he felt God calling him into full-time ministry. “I didn’t know what shape that was to take, so I looked for a place that would help me to focus,” he said. “So at 35, with a family, I went back to resume what I had started at 19 and enrolled at Kuyper where I received the focus I
“...patients...leave here knowing that, regardless of the despair they came in with, they have now found someone who cares about them, their health, their dignity and their future.”

Dan Grinwis—Grand Rapids

needed, as well as training, education and encouragement. My years at the College were truly used by the Lord to move me further upward to the next plane. I am firmly convinced that the level of academics was higher than what I could have expected from any other college.”

Regarding the faculty, Dan describes them as experts in their respective fields, demanding the highest of expectations while exercising discernment, flexibility and compassion toward all students, and clearly committed servants of their King. “There is not a one that I didn't both like and respect,” said Dan. And then with a twinkle in his eye, he added, “except for the one who gave me the only ‘B’ I received in four years and messed up my four-point. He is retired now and visited me at OHC a couple years ago. I told him that he was forgiven.”

During his years of study, Dan said that he was blessed to be working for a Christian, family-owned company that allowed him to construct a flexible, part-time work schedule that enabled him to pursue full-time studies. After graduation, Dan began part-time studies at Calvin Seminary while going back to work full-time. At the same time, Barbara was enrolled in the physician assistant program at Western Michigan University. After graduation, Barbara became not only a successful medical practitioner, but later began teaching prospective physician assistants in the Western Michigan University College of Health and Human Services.

In the early 2000s, Barbara began to entertain the thought of leaving academia for a return to clinical medicine, but this time with a focus on ministry by finding an avenue to serve the least of Christ’s brethren. Dan said that during this time they once again saw God’s leading. “Our son, Kevan, became involved with a small, nondenominational church in the near-downtown area of Grand Rapid’s northwest side,” said Dan. “Today he is the church’s associate pastor. At first, Barbara and I were concerned that he was becoming involved in some sort of off-the-wall fringe church. So we went to check it out. We never left.” Dan and Barbara knew that the neighborhood around the church was the place where they needed to settle. “The neighborhood was in the heart of what the federal government calls a ‘medically underserved area,’” said Dan. “It was populated largely by the ‘working poor,’ people with jobs that provided them with too little to afford health insurance and certainly not enough to pay a doctor or a clinic out-of-pocket, but just enough money to disqualify them for government assistance.”

So during the spring of 2005, Barbara left WMU to begin preparation to establish a low-cost or free medical clinic in this neighborhood that would target low-income individuals with absolutely no insurance of any kind, public or private. The Grinwis’ planned on relying on Dan’s management-level job to provide the money they would need. However, at the end of the summer of 2005, Dan’s position of 25 years came to an end as the company he worked for closed its doors. Without jobs, yet undaunted, the Grinwis’ applied for a mortgage to buy a 100-year-old building on the northwest side. They were planning on using the proceeds from the rental of their vacation home on Alabama’s gulf coast to finance the purchase—that is until Hurricane Ivan leveled the home.

Through a series of events that can only be described as miraculous, they were able to purchase, gut and renovate the building.

Today, the Oasis of Hope Center’s mission is being fulfilled every day as it provides free or low-cost medical care and basic life-skills education to the low-income and uninsured population of the northwest side of Grand Rapids. “We have wonderful and very adequate facilities that facilitate that purpose,” said Dan. “We utilize the services of an all-volunteer staff, we provide both treatment and medications at absolutely no cost, and we’ve been able to do that on over 4,000 occasions since opening our doors in the spring of 2007.”

However, it has not been easy. Since the middle of 2005, the Grinwis’ have not had a paycheck. And in 2008, Dan became so ill that he was placed in hospice while plans were being made for his funeral. “Whether it is the miracle of my being alive today,” said Dan, “or our ‘widow’s jar of oil’ medical supply room that never runs empty, or the hope that we see in patients’ faces as they leave here knowing that, regardless of the despair they came in with, they have now found someone who cares about them, their health, their dignity and their future—the Lord Himself makes the difference in every area of our lives, and we are faithfully provided for and lack nothing.”
inter

Internship continued from page 2

growing up,” she said. She was also involved in the nursery, youth group and choir of her church. “Through all of these experiences I learned to experience the love of the church family and its deep connection in Jesus Christ,” said Dickinson.

Both Dickinson and Lindberg did not come to Kuyper right out of high school. Dickinson came after having received an associate degree in culinary arts from Eastern Maine Community College. Lindberg came two years after her high school graduation.

“After I graduated from high school in 2004, I went to Brazil with a group from my church,” said Lindberg. “It was there that God began to form in my heart a desire to be a full-time missionary.” After a year of work, she realized that to be a missionary, she would need the proper training.

Going into their last year at Kuyper, both are very satisfied with their choice of school. “I came to Kuyper with a desire to further understand God and His purpose, to grow in being a Christ-like servant, to learn to love as Christ loves, to understand His word, and how to share it with His world,” said Dickinson. Lindberg agrees.

“There have been so many blessings and lessons born out of my years at Kuyper,” she said. “It is not what brought me to Kuyper, but who brought me—God Himself, in all His loving sovereignty.” Dickinson and Lindberg speak highly of all of their professors, with professors Teja and Renkema ranking very high on their lists. “Professor Teja enlarged my scope of understanding with knowledge and with heartfelt compassion that leads to responsive action,” said Lindberg. “He not only taught that ministry is word and deed, but also lived it.” Dickinson agreed and noted that both she and Lindberg often remembered during the difficult periods of their internship a recurring theme of Professor Renkema’s teaching. “Professor Renkema would say, ‘Flexibility, flexibility, flexibility is key to teaching English and imperative for ministry to a different culture.’” “And as it turned out,” added Lindberg, “necessary for our sanity.”

According to Lindberg and Dickinson, this internship has confirmed their worldview. “It’s one thing to study all of this from textbooks in Room 212; it is quite another to live it, to put flesh on it...always reforming...always changing according to His will,” said Lindberg. During their time in Dearborn, they taught English as a Second Language (ESL) at the Immigration Oasis Center, built trusting relationships with the Muslim women they taught, began to learn the history of Islam and the Arabic language, and were involved in an Arabic-speaking church community under the leadership of Haytham and Kathy Haydar (Haytham is from Lebanon and grew up as a Muslim, while Kathy is Canadian.) And beyond all of that, both of them say that they also learned how to give of themselves for others for the sake of Jesus.

During this time they met and interacted with people from Iraq, Syria, Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Yemen, as well as from several other Middle Eastern and African countries. “The conversations were always challenging,” said Lindberg. “I remember an interesting talk with a woman at a store. We went from polygamy to President Obama, to Jews, to the Trinity, to the hypocrisy of Christians, and the idea that Jesus wasn’t a Christian.” According to Dickinson, the women they teach are extremely kind and hospitable. “We’ve spent much time in their homes,” she said. “They often told us how much they miss us after the weekend: ‘I miss you too much,’ they say, followed by, ‘I love you too much.’ Their words still bring joy to our hearts.”

However, there was also much heartache and at times spiritual attacks as Lindberg and Dickinson realized that they were in a constant state of war against the powers of darkness. “This has been the hardest semester I’ve had at Kuyper,” said Lindberg. “In every conceivable manner—academically, relationally, spiritually and emotionally—I’ve struggled. Yet, though it’s been hard and my heart at times has waned in misery, the value of such lessons has been incomparable.” According to her, such close interaction with Islam has further opened her eyes to the “astounding beauty of our Savior and the blessings of His sacrifice.” She explained: “To see the desperate opposite of our hope lifts that hope higher. I have assurance knowing that I am washed in the blood of the Lamb, which tragically is something Muslims do not have. To us who follow Christ, God is not only God, but He is our Savior! That is both a foreign and a revolutionary thought to Muslims.”

Dickinson concurs. “Only two hours away from GR there are more mosques and Muslims than churches and Christians. This is a place where great numbers are lost in a false prophetic belief and a gender-biased and unequal society. How does one be light against such darkness? How do I share the gospel with Muslims?” Answers...
Horace continued from cover

“Did you know we do not subscribe to your service?” The driver, a young man, gave us a shy and awkward smile and said, “What do you mean?” We responded, “We mean, we did not ask your company to pick up our waste.” He eagerly explained that he picked up whatever is in the containers along the road. “My name is Horace,” he said. “I do not read, and I don’t understand my clipboard. I am glad to have such a good job. I keep the entire lakeshore clean. I am dependable. I do my best. Please don’t tell my boss I don’t read!” Finally, the maroon truck came by. We waved him to a stop and told him that we were contracted with him to pick up our waste, but someone usually beat him to it. “Yes, I figured as much,” he said. “I cashed your check last month although there was nothing to pick up.” So much for getting things settled once and for all. But, that’s life on the lakeshore.

After that, the yellow truck would park on our driveway for a while on Monday mornings, and Horace would come to our house to take reading lessons during his break. He was so eager to learn. It was indeed a pleasure to see him make such good progress. The neat thing about Horace was that he was so sincere. I once asked him why he never learned to read. He told me that in the hills of Kentucky, where he was raised, book learning was not important. “Besides,” he said, “Dad said I could never do anything right. I was too dumb to do book learning.” “Did you believe that?” I asked. “Yeah,” he said, “until my boss and the man at the dumpsite told me I was a strong, reliable and good worker. That means I can do something right.”

Now that Horace had new friends, he could not do enough for us. Once he came with a black, spindle-back chair trimmed in gold. He had found it in the garbage a mile down the road. It turned out to be a beautiful Hitchcock chair. And that indeed is life on the lakeshore.

Each new Monday with Horace was surely a special day. The reading lessons progressed nicely, and soon, he was reading at third grade level. He received much enjoyment from reading the children’s picture Bible that he took home for his reading assignments.

One Monday morning, as he sat in our family room sipping from his mug of hot cocoa, Horace shared about his past. He told us his father always called him “Horrible Horace.” His mother had died when he was born. He was their first and only child, and his father had given him to his aunt who had six children of her own. “She was cruel and demanding,” said Horace. “Some years later she sent me back to my dad, who always blamed me for my mother’s death. He told me I was no good and would beat me hard when I did things wrong.” Horace continued to share how they lived off the land and how he hunted squirrels and rabbits with his dog. “My dog and I were close,” he said. “Whenever I was sad, I would talk things over with my dog, and he always loved me.” During his late 20s, when his father became ill, Horace took care of him. “Dad wanted no part of doctoring, so I fed him and cleaned him up day after day,” he said. “We had our own pump in the yard for water. I cut wood for the stove to keep Dad warm during the cold months. I used the wood stove for cooking too. Finally, Dad would eat no more. For some days I sat by him on the floor. I wiped the sweat off his face and talked nice to him. I started to see in Dad something I had never seen before.” Horace’s father told him about his own past, about his harsh upbringing and difficult life as a boy growing up in the hills. He also talked about Horace’s mother and how much he had missed her gentleness for all those years. “Dad died early one morning before the sun came out,” he explained. I was touched by Horace’s story and asked him if he was bitter. “No,” was his reply. “I am glad I could take care of Dad. I stayed living in our shack for another couple of years. When my dog died—my best friend—I laid him to rest right next to Dad under the hickory tree.”

My heart was overwhelmed with sadness for this precious young man. I told him that I knew someone who went through ridicule, rejection and beatings. This man had never done anything wrong. “Who is he?” asked Horace. “His name is Jesus,” I responded. “He loved you enough to suffer and die for you. He understands.” Horace understood too, and from that day on there was a new bounce in his step.

In the middle of May, on a Wednesday morning, there was a knock at our door, and there stood Horace with a slight smile on his face. He was all decked out in the Gant plaid shirt and Dockers jeans we had found at the thrift store. “I am going home,” he announced, fighting back his tears. “I’m getting me a new dog and plan on settling near kinfolk.” He told us he had built a little shack in the Alleghan Forest and lived very much like he had lived back home where he grew up. His shack was furnished with treasures from his garbage route. “A man in uniform came and told me I was squatting on state land and had 48 hours to pack up and leave,” he said.

We were dumbfounded. I asked Horace, “How do you feel? Are you upset?” He replied: “I heard this long ago, and it made me think a lot. ‘When life hands you a lemon, you are given a choice to suck sour or to make lemonade.’ I always choose to make lemonade. I choose never to be bitter. I choose always to forgive and not look back.”

He thanked us for the good time he had in our home and the “learnin’ to read.” He pulled the children’s picture Bible from his backpack and asked if he could possibly keep it. We smiled, realizing how precious all the stories of the Bible had become to him. We assured him he could take his favorite book with him. “I’m not much for hugging; I only hugged my dog,” he said. “But can I give both of you one before I leave?” We hugged. We held hands and prayed together, while fighting back our tears. Horace quietly reflected, “Now I have the rest of my life...”

We watched Horace leave through our back woods in the direction of the expressway. He reminded us that he was not leaving alone. He said, “I’m taking someone with me—Jesus—my new-found Savior and friend.”
The modern equivalent of slavery, human trafficking involves millions of people around the world who are forced, against their will, to work for the profit of others. This forced labor includes begging, prostitution, involuntary servitude, debt bondage, pornography, and child soldiering.

Kuyper College’s Annual Global Issues Summit seeks to educate and inform the West Michigan Community on major issues of global importance. The global issue summit will be held at Sunshine Community Church, 3300 East Beltline NE, Grand Rapids, MI.

To register or for more information:
- Go to kuyper.edu/global
- Call (616) 988-3639
- Email globalissues@kuyper.edu

There are many special events that take place at Kuyper College. There is also an e-Newsletter. If you would like to receive event information and the e-Newsletter on line please send your email address to: advancement@kuyper.edu.