

WHITE PINE PRESS

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

Who Won Over NMC? It's Up For Debate

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News-in-Brief

Emma Marion
Editor-In-Chief

NMC ended its 18 year long contract with Sodexo to provide meals on campus. They are being replaced with an in-house team.

NMC's plan to annex Benzie County has fallen through due to an error on the ballot.

Fiona Hill and Khaled Elgindy visited NMC's Dennon museum last week as a part of the International Affairs Program.

NMC has changed its COVID-19 protocol. The college will no longer track infections or exposures on campus, and will not require students to be off-campus for a specific number of days.

JD Vance gave remarks in the Fairgrounds this previous Wednesday in Traverse City ahead of the November presidential election.

New Title IX rules have taken effect on campus. If a student reports to a faculty member that they are pregnant,

the faculty member should report to their Title IX coordinator. As a part of this effect, new lactation spaces are being identified on campus for mothers.

On Sept. 4, NMC signed the Articles of Incorporation between Northwestern Michigan College and the Discovery Pier to create the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center.

Enrollment is up from 4% to 6% in the Communications department.

NMC held the first ADN to BSN nursing graduation ceremony in partnership with Davenport University last month with 12 graduating students.

Kyle Morrison is the new esports director for NMC.

NMC's aviation program is looking to expand its hangar.

Prepare to vote in the November election by checking your registration online at <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/>

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If you would like to learn more, contact faculty adviser Jacob Wheeler at jwheeler@nmc.edu or editor-in-chief Emma Marion at emarion@nmc.edu

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NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE

WHITE PINE PRESS

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Feeling Lost? You're not alone



Illustration Credit Eli Stallman

Eli Stallman Staff Writer

Most young adults come face to face with a whole new world of freedom after graduating high school.

Freedom to go to college, enter the workforce, to move out and begin making some of the most influential decisions of their lives. This freedom can be liberating, yet intimidating. Many people feel lost and overwhelmed trying to decide where they want to take their lives next, which is completely normal in such pivotal transitional periods. This feeling resonates heavily with many college students, including NMC's student body.

Forty-seven year old Melanie Griffith was an education transfer student in the early 2000s, and currently helps with the admissions for the nursing program at NMC. When reflecting upon her transition from high school to college, she says, "right after high school I did feel a lot of pressure to go to college, I went to Central Michigan for a semester on a scholarship, I did okay but my heart and my head was not in it at the time so I did drop out after that first semester."

Pressure to attend a college immediately after high school in order to jumpstart a career before it's too late is common, and can sometimes drive young adults to make decisions that aren't necessarily right for them. Griffith continues, "I worked in different fields like a factory and

a sub shop and a bank teller, but to have the income to support myself I did feel like it was necessary to go back. ... I started NMC when I was working full time as a bank teller, and my goal had always been to be a teacher."

For individuals struggling to figure out what's next, periods of experimentation with different jobs and interests before committing to college can be extremely beneficial. Despite these benefits, there tends to be a negative stigma surrounding gap years. Many people worry that not attending college right away puts them at a professional disadvantage, and that young people who take gap years may never go back to school to advance their careers. Being guided by stigma and pressure as a young person can be harmful, and makes decision-making a lot less clear.

Whether or not it's right to pursue time off school is extremely situational. It is certain that gap years are not for everyone — and sometimes pressure can be a motivator. Marcus Johnson, 20-year-old Visual Communications student, says "I definitely felt pressured a little bit, I felt like I had to go to college but I'm kind of glad I did. It's just keeping me on my feet and giving me something to look forward to."

Johnson also expressed concerns over finding well-paying positions in animation, "I could turn around and

pick an entirely different major and secure myself a better-paying job, but it's like I've been doing art for so long and I feel like it's what I have to do."

He added that, "Animation is changing a lot which kind of turns me away from it, it made me realize I need to pick a second option just in case that doesn't work out which I have."

Kendal Bartnick, an 18-year-old liberal arts and sciences major, shares Johnson's sentiment, "I really like playing instruments ... I've always thought I could go into doing something like that, but my mom is really independent ... she's always pushed me to get a job that I can support myself with."

For most students, facing frequent periods of doubt while pursuing a degree is normal — and it is important to recognize that nobody is alone in feeling a little lost. Whether it's best for you to take a gap year, chase your dream job, or stick with a reliable money-guaranteed career, you're on your own path and no one else's. The only thing anyone can know for sure is that mistakes will be made, and that something unexpected may change the course of your path. The process of nurturing a fulfilling future for yourself is difficult but exhilarating, and is a journey that lasts a whole lifetime.

Who Won Over NMC? It's Up For Debate

Minnie Bardenhagen On Tuesday, Sept. 10, the first and only presidential debate between the major party nominees, Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, was hosted by ABC news. Prior to the debate, the two respective parties were essentially tied in the polls, with Harris having a small lead nationally according to *The New York Times*.

The debate's atmosphere seemed to be a confident, well-prepared one for Harris, and an uneasy, frustrated one for Trump, which was reflected by some students on NMC's campus.

Elvis Hall, a left-leaning student with an undecided major, was impressed with Harris's debate performance, "Vice president Kamala Harris definitely showed her true colors. She presented herself as a reliable leader who's looking forward instead of backwards"

"I think she played former president Trump very well," he added.

Alex Roush, another left-leaning student, shared this sentiment.

"I think Kamala Harris had a more direct nail on the head approach as far as questions she was asked during the debate," he described, "and [she responded] to former president Trump's remarks and comments in an appropriate and manageable way."

An issue that is known to be relevant with young voters is climate and the environment. While the issue was briefly mentioned towards the end of the debate, Roush expressed he would have liked to see more.

"Trump's whole idea of fracking and oil drilling are not what I want to see for my country. It's doing so much harm for very little good, when we really need to be searching for alternative methods," said Roush, who continued on to address Harris's lack of acknowledgement of the issue, "I

would've been much more satisfied if Harris had been talking about renewable energy, about ideas of where our waste and trash are going, rather than going straight into manufacturing like she did."

On the other hand, student Maddy Randolph brought up the issue of abortion, a large concern for many voters.

"I think Harris handled it really well," Randolph said, "She brought in stories and really addressed the question, whereas Trump didn't really even address the question, he kind of redirected."

"I think the issue is that women need to have their own bodily autonomy, and that shouldn't be something that is up for debate, period."

While she went into the debate knowing she would most likely vote for Harris, Randolph still thought it was important for her to watch the debate to understand each candidate's policies.

"I want to know if Trump does end up as president, how is that going to affect me?" She explained.

The sentiment shared by many American voters is that they don't have enough information on either of the candidates' policy plans, especially Kamala Harris, who entered the race just two months ago after a historic drop-out by current President Joe Biden.

Ty Peterson, a recent graduate from NMC's audio tech program who typically leans right, expressed his uncertain view about either of the potential presidents. For him, the debate leaned too much in the candidates criticizing each other, rather than promoting or explaining their specific policies.

"Based on what I've seen so far, it didn't seem like I was getting good information or good answers from either side," Peterson explained, "I want to know more about what I'm saying 'yes' or 'no' to in terms of the two candidates."

Peterson is far from the only unsure voter. Bercan Talty, who describes himself as an independent, has different reasons for his hesitance toward the candidates.

"I think the United States partnership with Israel needs to be ended, and I think neither candidate is working towards that," Talty said, sharing the thoughts of a large number of undecided voters.

Citizens across the country have joined together in protesting the way the Biden administration has approached the conflict in Gaza. For many voters, each of the candidates' unwavering support of Israel, despite the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, is a vital issue. Michigan in particular has a very large "uncommitted" movement, which sprang to life when more than 100,000 voters in the state selected that option on their democratic primary ballot as a form of protest, according to the Associated Press.

While Talty gave Harris a bit of credit, he maintained that neither candidate satisfied him on the issue, "I think Harris might've slightly did it better. I don't think it was by a wide enough margin for me to feel confident about her, but I definitely think she held up to the debate in a better way."

This is not the only foreign policy issue that concerned Talty. With Russia and Ukraine still in conflict after about two-a-half-years, Talty and many other voters are concerned how the president-elect will affect the US approach to the issue.

"I think Ukraine does need to win in order for us as a country to move forward in a positive light, and I'm very worried about Trump's relationship with Putin affecting how the war ends," Talty explained, "I think the war needs to be ended in a particular way in order for future conflicts to be prevented, and just ending it right as he [Trump] becomes president elect the way he says he is going to ... I think in the next couple of years we'll see that war start up again."

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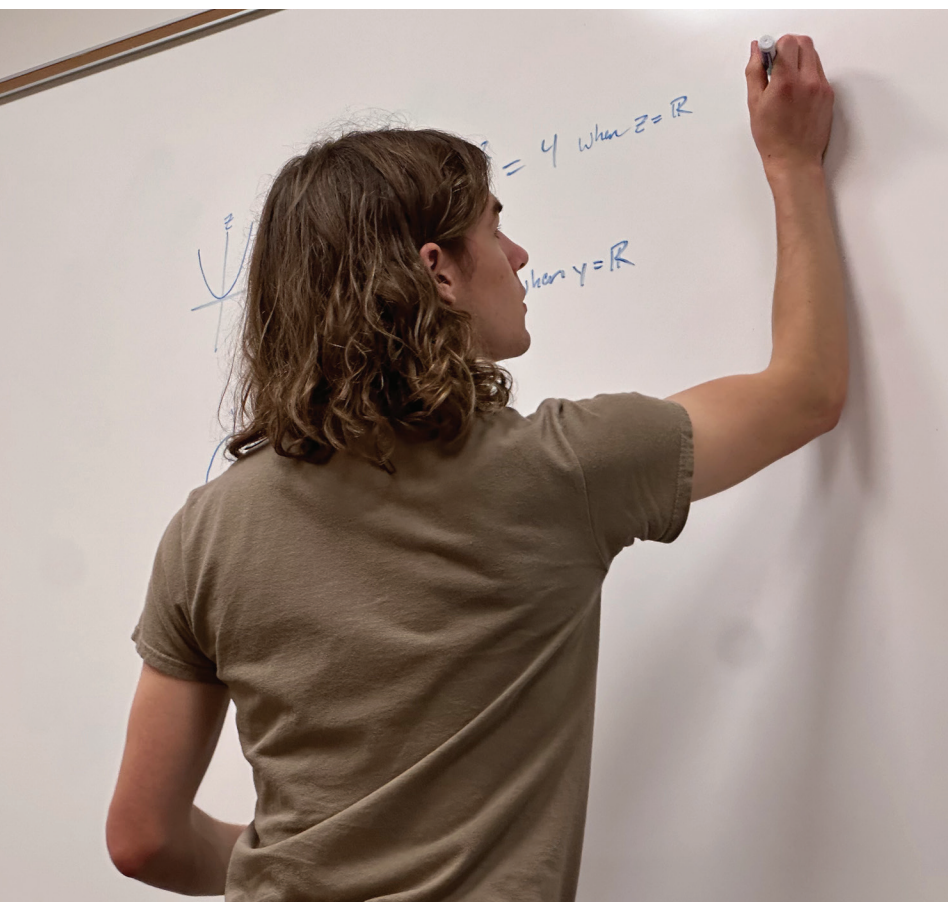


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Liam Girard working on calculus in the Innovation Center



Photo Credit Emma Marion

How Gov. Whitmer's Community College Guarantee Impacts NMC Students

Anna Wildman Staff Writer This June, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer passed legislation that offers free community college tuition to recent high school graduates, also known as the Community College Guarantee. The guarantee only applies to 2023 and 2024 graduate students and has other modest eligibility criteria concerning basic things like the student's citizenship status, Michigan residency, and full-time enrollment.

Unlike the Michigan Achievement Scholarship, the Community College guarantee has no income requirement. In other words, a student's FAFSA report does not have to demonstrate financial need in order to qualify.

Additionally, the Community College Guarantee is applied after a student's federal financial aid, meaning that those who receive a large amount of FAFSA money are not affected by it. These factors put this legislation in a unique position to specifically benefit students from middle-income families who do not receive much financial aid, which describes plenty of students in Traverse City.

Compared to students from higher and lower income families, students from middle income families often suffer the most when it comes to paying for education. Middle income families usually are not eligible for much aid, yet often lack the means to pay for college out-of-pocket, forcing many students to take out loans and ultimately end up in debt.

The fact that the FAFSA considers the value of a student's

home could easily misrepresent a family's ability to pay tuition in a place like Traverse City where property values have been steeply rising for years. The Community College Guarantee is an opportunity for students who wouldn't otherwise have received financial aid (other than scholarships) to begin their college education without having to worry about student loans.

Calla Behrmann, a freshman student at NMC who graduated high school May of 2024, received almost no financial aid from the FAFSA. "My house is worth about \$500k, and as someone from a middle-income family, I definitely did not receive enough financial aid to cover the cost of NMC. I don't necessarily feel strongly about it, but I feel like the fact that FAFSA considers a family's house worth is potentially unfair to those whose houses have significantly risen in value since they were bought."

Calla's decision to enroll at NMC was definitely influenced by the fact that it came at zero cost.

"I was considering going to MSU before I heard about the community college guarantee. Even though NMC is still significantly cheaper than a large university like MSU, either way I would have had to take out a ton of student loans to cover the cost. Since I heard about the community college guarantee I knew it made way more sense to go to NMC."

Students who no longer live with their families benefit greatly from the guarantee, especially when they are

completely responsible for their own expenses. Liam Girard, a second-year student who graduated high school in 2023, is an example.

"I live with three roommates and I wasn't going to be able to afford to make rent payments this year because I couldn't work full time during school. Our initial plan was to reduce the share of rent I had to pay, but the community college guarantee allowed me to afford rent and spend the money I made from working part-time on stuff like groceries and other necessities."

For students like Liam, paying for college can be a serious stress on one's personal life and disrupt the balance between school and work. This is especially difficult for those who plan to complete a bachelor's degree, as they will have to worry about paying tuition for at least six years, which is the case for Liam.

"Because of my parent's income situation, I didn't receive any direct financial aid from the FAFSA. I received \$6,000 in scholarship funds, but I can now use that money to pay for future education. I plan on going to Michigan Tech after I graduate, so I'll definitely need to worry about tuition beyond NMC."

The community college guarantee is not just convenient but crucial for those who need to use their college fund for years to come, and will certainly mitigate student loan debt for thousands of Michigan students.

"Sophie's House": An Optimistic Return To Form

Emma Marion Last Thursday, indie-pop-rock sensation half•alive released the lead single to their 3rd album, titled "Sophie's House." Having seemingly departed from RCA Records after the rocky roll-out of their sophomore album, this will be their first independently published full-length album.

With their first record tackling broad concepts such as trust, faith, being present, resting, and their second album essentially being an 18-track break-up album (take THAT Taylor Swift), their third album, "Persona," looks to reflect on youth and freedom. A breath of fresh air, and a thematic return to form for the band.

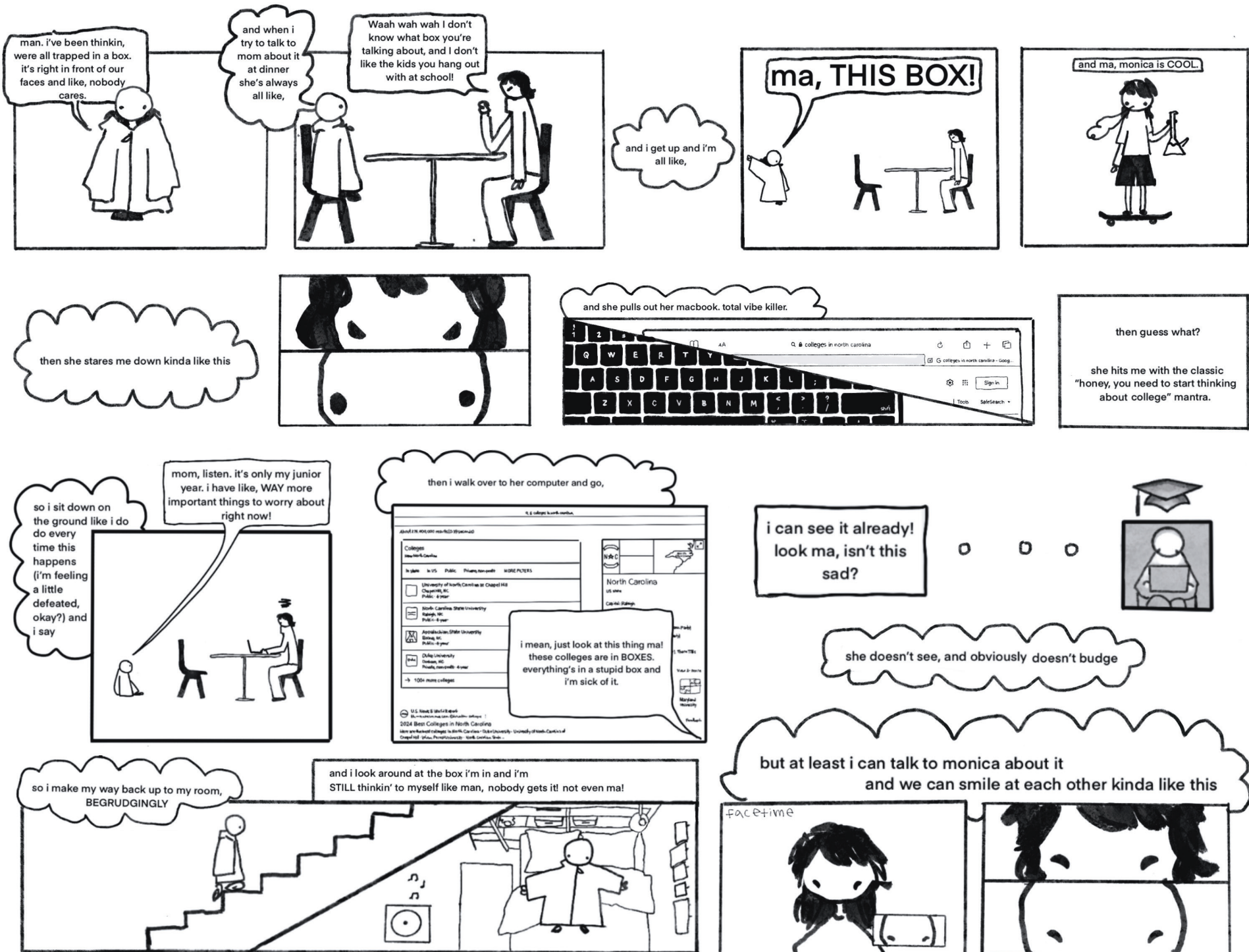
While at first glance the lyricism seems to continue the themes of love and heartbreak found on their previous album, "Conditions Of A Punk," upon a few re-listens the themes of youth start to shine through. With Josh singing about how "the hours we wasted were hardly a waste at all," and "wish that I could see I'm having the time of my life."

This album also looks to be a concept album. The

two monster characters featured on the album cover seem to be named Sonny (left) and Cher (right). If true, this would not be the first time the band has attempted a narrative. "Conditions Of A Punk" featured a series of disjointed music videos about two lovers without a clear throughline. Thankfully, the concept of two muppet monsters is already infinitely more intriguing than their previous narrative work.

"Sophie's House" fantastically blends the sounds of their first two albums. The funky beats and electronic riffs from "Conditions Of A Punk" meet the light optimism of "Now, Not Yet." Even the final bridge of the song is strongly reminiscent of a previous experimental stand-alone single: "TIME 2."

It feels groovy, fresh, bright, and extremely colorful. It smells like healthy nostalgia and tastes like food from your childhood that's always on the tip of your tongue. It looks care-free, and sounds sharp. If you are a fan of electronic indie-rock/pop, give this one a listen.



Upcoming Events!

10/01
10:15am
Coffee with Success Coaches
@ Osterlin Building Lobby

10/02
10:15am
Walk in advising
@ Innovation Center

10/07
2:00pm
Davenport Fall Transfer Tea
@ Innovation Center

10/07
6:00pm
Applying to college 101
@ Innovation Center

10/08
10:15am
Annual Fall Fest Student Networking Event
@ Innovation Center

10/08
11:00am
Coffee with Success Coaches
@ Osterlin Building Lobby

10/09
11:00am
Walk In Advising
@ Innovation Center

10/09
11:00am
Transfer Fair
@ Innovation Center

10/09
6:00pm
College Night
@ Innovation Center



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Future physician assistant: 'Grand Valley has allowed me to learn where I live'

Michele Coffill
Grand Valley State University

Maddison Medler is invested in Traverse City and said she was

fortunate to find an educational path and future career that allowed her to stay in the area.

Medler is in the second year of a master's degree in physician assistant studies at Grand Valley State University's Traverse City Campus, after earning a GVSU bachelor's degree in allied health sciences. She earned an associate degree from Northwestern Michigan College and said the transition to GVSU was smooth and easy.

"I joined NMC's Pre-PA Society, went to one meeting and just loved it," Medler said. "I learned what classes to take. The advisors at both NMC and GVSU were so helpful."

Her road to a health care career started with earning a certified nursing assistant license to work at Grand Traverse Pavilions, a long-term nursing facility. She also worked at Munson Medical Center in the cardiac intensive care unit.

"I was a nurse aide at Munson and responsible for about a half of a floor, taking patients' vital signs and ensuring their care was updated," she said. "My schedule was busy but good.



Maddison Medler

via distance learning technology for lectures. Medler said GVSU faculty do an excellent job of making students in Traverse City and Grand Rapids feel like one campus, rather than two separate programs.

Medler serves as vice president for the program's professional student association, the Richard Paul Clodfelder Student Society, named for Grand Valley's first medical director of the program. Students from Grand Rapids and Traverse City connect in a distance learning lab for those meetings also.

I would often go to class in the mornings, then work in the afternoons until 11 p.m."

Students and faculty in Traverse City's physician assistant studies program connect daily with their peers in Grand Rapids

Applicants for Grand Valley's physician assistant studies program are required to complete 500 volunteer hours. For Medler, that was not a problem. She served as a VISTA worker with AmeriCorps, helping to stock food pantries in Interlochen, Fife Lake and other surrounding areas. She also volunteered at the Botanical Garden at Historic Barns Park.

"My grandpa has volunteered there for a long time; it was fun to work with him," she said.

Medler said working in health care is a way to give back to the community that raised her.

"I have always valued family. I'm from three generations of teachers in Traverse City, and my grandparents are aging, so it was important for me to stay in the area," she said. "Grand Valley allowed me to learn where I live and be around who I value."

Physician Assistant Studies in Traverse City

For more information about the Traverse City Campus or the GVSU Physician Assistant Studies program, please contact us at (231) 995-1785 or nminfo@gvsu.edu.

Visit gvsu.edu/tclibstudies to learn more.

More Than Books, NMC Library Offers “Things”

Megan Thoreson
Staff Writer

Beginning in February 2023, NMC’s Library in the Student Innovation Center opened The Library of Things, which has rentable items available to any interested student currently enrolled at NMC.

Some items available are geared toward classes offered at NMC that students might prefer to rent rather than buy. Nursing students can rent amplified stethoscopes, while Audio and Digital tech can rent equipment and cables. The Library of Things also offers fun things like games, musical instruments, webcams, yarn, crochet hooks, and more. Art prints are also available for dorm students to rent to beautify their living spaces, with more things being added all the time.

Nicole Wenstrup MSI, Librarian and Archivist added “Students can request that certain items be added to the library of things, and after an official request and enough interest, we can add it!”

If any student has such a request, they can email library@nmc.edu to inquire.

In addition to the Library of Things, NMC’s Library also offers Chromebooks and Thinkpads for students to rent semester to semester.

“It is a goal of NMC to make sure students have the resources they need while they’re here and so much is online now,” Wenstrup said. In 2019 the college began offering laptops to students in need after partnering with Systems and LAN Management.

“Even in pre-pandemic times the college was purchasing Chromebooks to be used in classes. Once everything went virtual the need went up, and since then we have accumulated 68 laptops available for students to check out over a semester.” Nico Pandolfi MSI, librarian said.

Ten more Chromebooks will be added by next semester to accommodate the rising need for accessible technology here at NMC. The only downside to the rentable laptops is that they lack full functionality that personal computers have. Software, games, etc., cannot be downloaded while borrowing a library computer.



Photo credit, Megan Thoreson