Kalamazoo Public Schools

EXCELSIOR

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November 2026 · Volume 30, Issue 4

Past, Present, Future: Celebrating KPS Success

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Celebrating the Legacy and Support of KPS Alumni

A Message from the Superintendent



Dr. Darrin Slade

FALL BRINGS many traditions to Kalamazoo: maybe you look forward to grabbing a pumpkin donut from Sweetwater's or your family plans a trip to Gull Meadow Farms to enjoy the corn maze or pick apples. It's also the return of a familiar high school tradition: the big homecoming game. Students at Kalamazoo Central and Loy Norrix spent the week leading up to their games participating in Spirit Weeks, which included "Throwback Day" and "PJ Day".

Homecoming also brings graduates from near and far to Kalamazoo to celebrate their roots. This year, Loy Norrix held an Athletics Hall of Fame Ceremony that honored graduates from 1970 to 2016. Members of the Kalamazoo Central Classes in the 1980s (on the cover) gathered on the field in their maroon and white for a photo during the big game.

We see our alumni's legacy and support in different ways throughout the district. Three years ago, we celebrated the opening of a new baseball and softball field, courtesy of Major League Hall of Famer Derek Jeter and his sister, Sherlee, a talented softball shortstop herself. In November, KAMSC will celebrate its 40th year and is inviting alumni to a special event on November 24. We also see support in everyday ways: alumni liking a Facebook post, buying a ticket to a school play, voting for a bond.

It's wonderful to get to celebrate the legacy of our KPS alumni and the great successes they've achieved. What's equally as special is the passion and expertise we gain from our graduates who have returned to KPS. Or they moved to the area for their college degree and stayed. We highlighted just a few of the teachers who are KPS graduates in last month's Excelsior. In October, to celebrate National Principal's Month, you may have seen posts highlighting Sierra Prather, Principal of Woods Lake, a Loy Norrix graduate and former cheer captain. Dr. Natalie Wilson, Principal of El Sol, graduated from Kalamazoo Central and played saxophone in the marching band. Phoenix High School principal Ajamian Gardner is a Loy Norrix graduate. Kalamazoo Central's principal Valerie Boggan calls herself a "Giant Knight" because she is actually a Loy Norrix graduate.

Those ties to the community show up in our central office staff as well. Our Chief Financial Officer, Laura Kayser, graduated from Loy Norrix. Our Director of Facilities, Karen Jackson, and Director of Transportation, Terri Aman, are Kalamazoo Central graduates. Two of our Student Services superstars are alumni. Mindi Miller is one of the proud Kalamazoo Central graduates on the cover, and Keela Hemphill is a Loy Norrix Knight. And my amazing assistant, Nicole DeGraaf, is a Kalamazoo Central grad.

It is an honor to work with people who know their community so well, who walked the halls of the schools they now work in. It helped me get up to speed when I joined the district in 2023, and it also shaped my growing appreciation and passion for Kalamazoo and its students.

No matter which district school you spent time learning in, there's one thing we can all cheer for: continuing to see our Kalamazoo Public Schools alumni grow and thrive in the world.



The Kalamazoo Promise Announces Expansion to Historically Black Colleges and Universities

AFTER 20 YEARS of supporting Kalamazoo Public Schools students and their journeys after high school graduation, the Kalamazoo Promise announced it is expanding its funding reach. Starting in fall 2027, the scholarship will extend to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

The Kalamazoo Promise has been paying up to 100% of tuition and mandatory fees for graduates of Kalamazoo Public Schools who attend eligible colleges and universities in Michigan since 2005. Now accredited 4-year HBCUs across the country will also be eligible. It is the first time Promise scholars have been able to use the scholarship outside of Michigan.

Years went into the planning for this expansion. A committee of local education leaders and representatives from community organizations reviewed research on HBCUs and considered how the initiative could best serve future scholars.

"Belonging and identity are just as essential to student success as access," shared Sarah Klerk, chief strategy officer at The Kalamazoo Promise. "Now fewer of our scholars will have to choose between financial support and a school where they see themselves reflected. Removing that tradeoff is part of our commitment to closing gaps in educational and economic outcomes."

"We extend our deepest gratitude to The Kalamazoo Promise's visionary leaders and anonymous donors for their continuing commitment to our graduates," said Dr. Darrin Slade, Superintendent of KPS, "This initiative is expected to significantly increase scholarship utilization by removing geographic boundaries, allowing more scholars to choose the educational path that fits them best."

Since its start, the Promise has benefited more than 9,000 scholars with more than $250 million awarded. Promise scholars have earned more than 3,700 degrees and postsecondary credentials from more than 60 Michigan institutions. Students have 10 years to take advantage of the scholarship. The scholarship's expansion does not retroactively pay for past semesters, but students currently at HBCUs can begin to use the Promise in fall of 2027.

To learn more about The Kalamazoo Promise, visit **kalamazoopromise.com**



Gift Book Sale!
Begins Friday, November 27
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Friends Bookstore offers hundreds of gift quality, like-new books for all ages!



FRIENDS BOOKSTORE
Central Library | 315 S. Rose Street | Lower Level

Wed Noon - 6 p.m.
Thurs 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Fri 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sat 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Save the Date for our next Bag of Books Sale
January 30, 2027

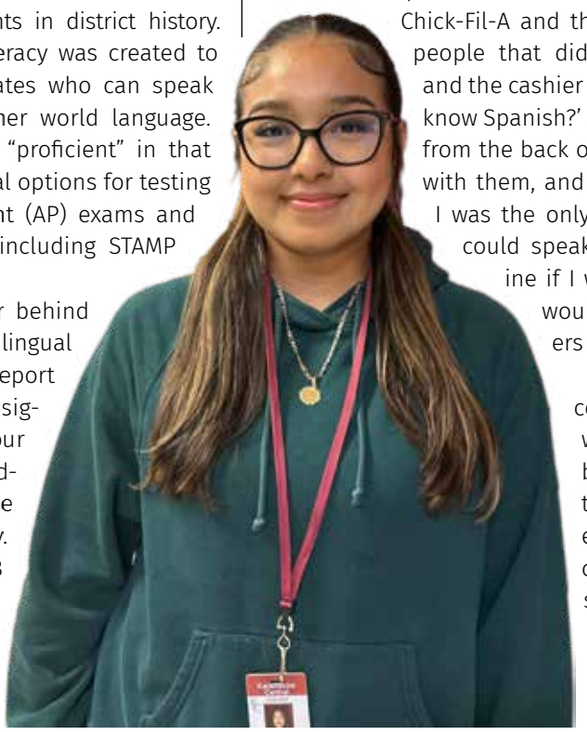
kpl.gov/friends | 269-553-7820

Growing Opportunities with the "Michigan Seal of Biliteracy"

KALAMAZOO Public Schools is celebrating another big achievement when it comes to student success: the highest number of Michigan Seal of Biliteracy recipients in district history.

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy was created to recognize high school graduates who can speak English and at least one other world language. They need to be considered "proficient" in that language, and there are several options for testing including Advanced Placement (AP) exams and other national assessments including STAMP and ALTA.

A big supporter and driver behind this program is KPS's Multilingual Services Department. They report that the program has seen significant growth in the last four years. In 2022, KPS had 14 graduates earn the seal through the AP Spanish assessment only. In 2026, the program had 68 students and more than 18 languages ranging from Swahili to Arabic to Greek. That's nearly five times growth in just four years.



Gianna Ortega

Gianna Ortega, a senior at Kalamazoo Central, will graduate with her Seal of Biliteracy this year. Ortega says her exposure and experience in Kalamazoo Public Schools helped her to master a language other than English. While she spoke some Spanish growing up, she learned more as a student at El Sol Elementary, a dual language Spanish immersion school. Students at the school spend half their instructional time learning in English, the other half in Spanish. During her time at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, Ortega said she was able to take a more advanced Spanish Language class. At the high school level, she got a 5 (the highest score) on her AP Spanish exam and her teacher, Ms. Itzel Gomez encouraged her to go for the seal.

"She was just mentioning that it was a really good opportunity to have recognition in something that is not just important with Spanish speakers, [but] with everyone," Ortega shared. "It's a pretty profound recognition, especially in a workspace, like in my job."

Right now, Ortega is interested in pursuing a career as a veterinary technician, and she's already seeing how her language skill set could help with future patients and customers. "I work at Chick-Fil-A and there was a group of people that did not know English, and the cashier asked, 'Does anyone know Spanish?' ... They pulled me up from the back of the house, I talked with them, and I got it all situated. I was the only person there [who could speak Spanish] so imagine if I wasn't there. People would have left, customers gone."

She also saw success in the seniors who have graduated before her, seeing them get acceptances into competitive colleges like University of Michigan.

Students who earn the Seal of Biliteracy see the door open to a range of benefits, according to the Multilingual Services Department. Included in their list:

- **College Admissions:** The seal is recognized as a mark of academic rigor and achievement
- **Academic Recognition:** It validates years of rigorous language study and dedication
- **Cultural Identity:** It celebrates heritage, belonging, and community connection
- **Career Readiness:** Language skills meet the demands of local workers
- **Military Service:** Advanced enlistment rank honors bilingual proficiency
- **Global Citizenship:** Earning the seal equips students to engage, lead, and thrive across cultures and borders

Ortega's advice for students who think they may be interested in getting the seal: it's easy to find the support you may need within KPS.

"My advice is go for it because you're gonna get help either way. If you don't understand it, you're going to get help, there's so much help that you can get. Not even from [just] teachers, but your classmates as well. So, even if [foreign language] isn't something you want to pursue after this, it's still really good to have."

Multilingual Coordinator Receives Leadership Award

WESSAM ABDELAZIZ, Coordinator of Multilingual Services and World Languages at KPS, received El Concilio's Nezahualcoyotl Award. El Concilio is a nonprofit organization that helps support and celebrate Kalamazoo's Latinx community. The group says the Nezahualcoyotl Award recognizes a professional leader who has been involved with El Concilio's effort to support and create greater opportunities for students in Kalamazoo. They say he has advocated for inclusiveness, equality, and diversity in Kalamazoo Public Schools.

KPS's Multilingual Department supports students and parents who speak a language other than English, as our students come from approximately 50 backgrounds. KPS also has a dual-language immersion program (Spanish and English) at El Sol Elementary School. There are also several bilingual centers with full-time staff throughout the district.

Congratulations, Mr. Abdelaziz!



Wessam Abdelaziz receives the leadership award from Adrian Martinez and Consuelo Shank.

You can find more information on KPS's Multilingual Department at **www.kalamazoopublicschools.com/departments/multilingual-services**

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NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

Director of School Improvement, Title I and Assessments
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0180

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Director of Human Resources
Kalamazoo Public Schools
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Kalamazoo, MI 49008
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District Directory at :
www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

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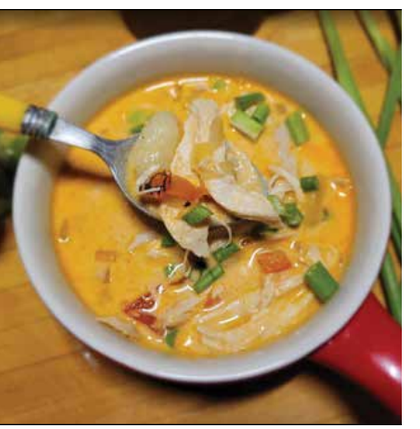
Chicken Paprikosh Soup w/Gnocchi

AS NOVEMBER brings crisp autumn air and frosty evenings, there is no better comfort than a steaming bowl of homemade soup. This month's featured recipe — Chicken Paprikash Soup — takes all the rich, smoky, Hungarian-inspired flavors of the classic cozy dish and transforms them into a quick, simple meal that comes together with minimal fuss on a busy weeknight.

Not only does this vibrant, velvety soup warm you up from the inside out, but it also makes incredible leftovers. Batch-cook it over the weekend, and you'll have easy, delicious lunches ready to go all week long. Grab your favorite mug, tuck into a bowl, and enjoy a taste of pure autumn comfort!

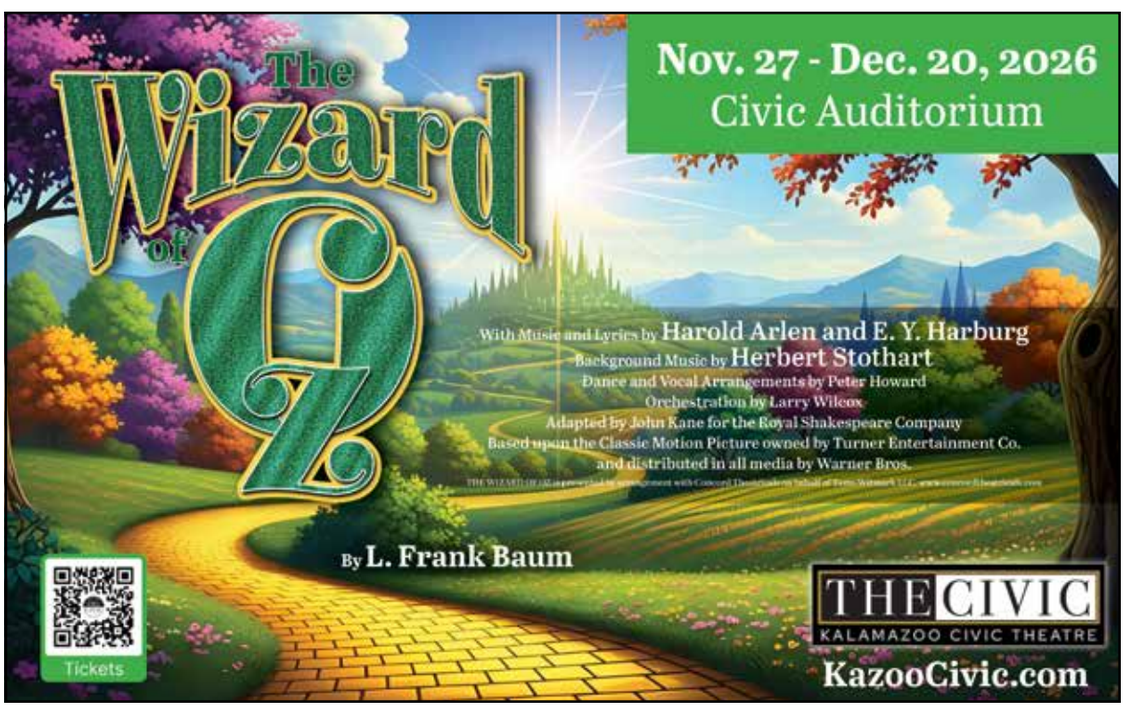
Scan me to see recipie demo!

Makes 8-10 servings



Ingredients
3 tbsp. butter
1 lg. onion, diced
1 orange bell pepper
3 tbsp. paprika
1 rotisserie chicken, meat removed and chopped/shredded
1 ½ quart chicken stock or broth
16 oz. gnocchi
1 can fire-roasted tomatoes
16 oz. sour cream
Green onion for garnish
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation
1. Melt butter in a large stock pot.
2. Add onion, bell pepper, and paprika. Cook until translucent.
3. Prepare the gnocchi according to package directions.
4. Remove chicken meat and shred or cut into bite-size pieces.
5. Once veggies are cooked, add chicken broth and diced tomatoes.
6. Add cooked gnocchi and chicken.
7. Bring soup to a simmer.
8. To add the sour cream, remove some of the hot broth with a ladle, about ¾ cup. Whisk the sour cream into the ¾ cup broth. Then add back into the soup and mix well.
9. Salt and pepper to taste
10. Top with green onion and enjoy!



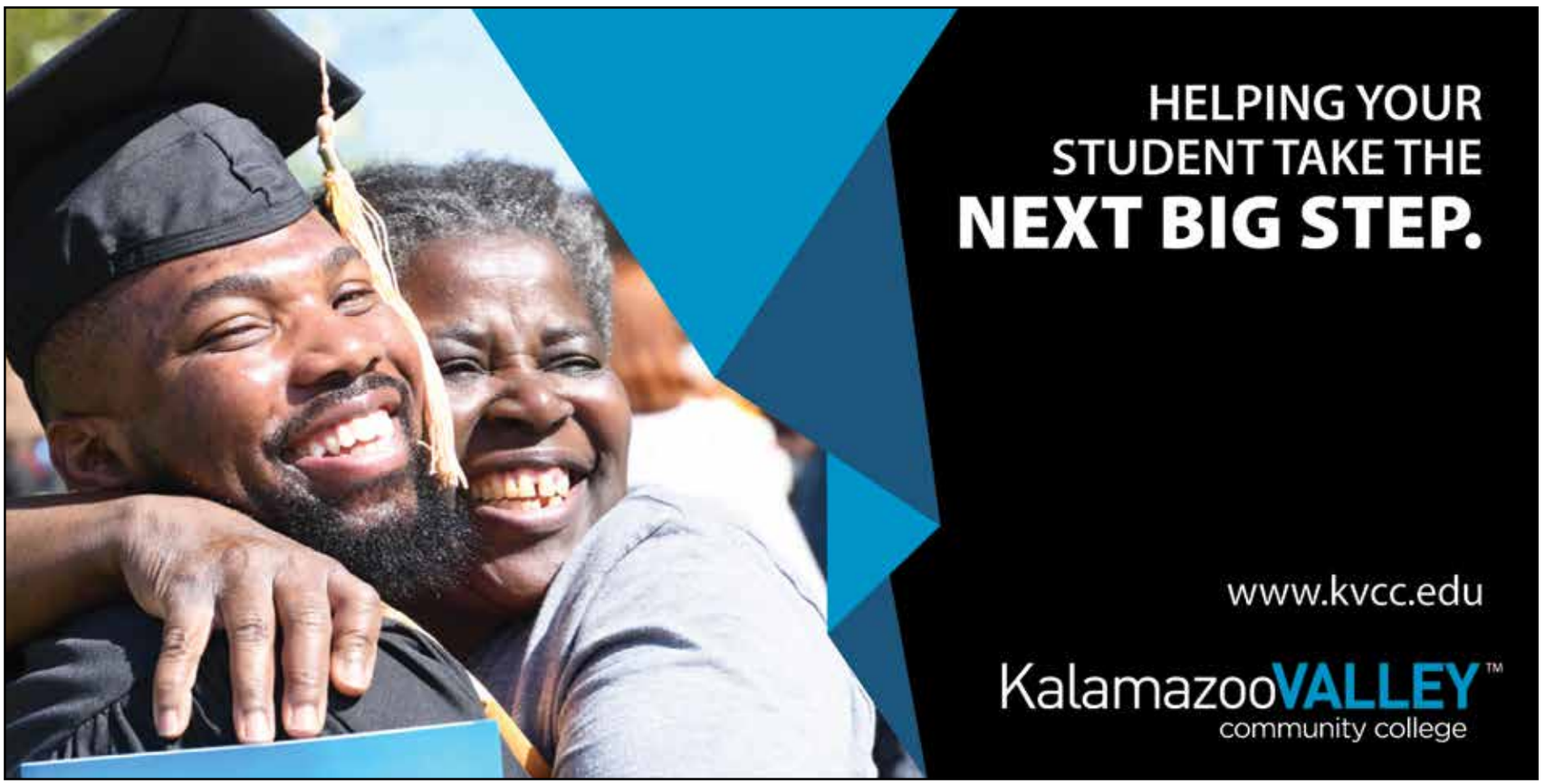
KAMSC Is Celebrating 40 Years!

CELEBRATE 40 years of excellence at the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center with an unforgettable evening, Investing in Innovation. The special anniversary event brings together alumni, supporters, and community members to honor four decades of inspiring STEM education across Kalamazoo County. Guests will enjoy an open house and guided tour of the center, hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction, all leading up to a program in Chenery Auditorium that takes attendees on a journey reflecting the decades. As a fundraiser for the center, the evening offers a meaningful opportunity to reflect on its impact while investing in the future of innovative learning. Get ready to be part of something extraordinary at the KAMSC 40th Anniversary event!





For more information visit kamsc.org or scan the QR code above.




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ON THE COVER:

Members of the Kalamazoo Central Class of 1986 reunited for their 40th anniversary.

Homecoming 2026!



Jermaine (JJ) Maddox, Giovanni (Gio) Williams, and George Hollis.



Taylor Roberts-Thomas, Kaidence Bennett, Lucy Baker, and Marion Bowler.





Kristiarose VerBeck, Ethan Katz, Emeli Guanon, and Luciana Martinez Maldonado.



Trevon Anderson, Dehlan Pitts, Anthony Williams, Antrinell Bragg, and Stanleon Watt.



The Kalamazoo Central color guard takes the field.



Members of the 2026 Loy Norrix Homecoming Court.

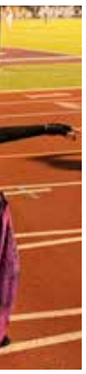


KC cutli





Kalamazoo Central Varsity Football took on Battle Creek Central for their homecoming showdown, a rivalry that dates back to 1893.





Alicia Vallar, Ruby Santiago, Mars Ware, Eliot Zolen, Kimora Nelson, and Journey Braxton.



Greg Straka, Kalamazoo Central Athletic Director and Greg Jennings, Super Bowl champion and class of 2001.



Loy Norrix played Lakeview High School for its homecoming showdown.



rs of the 2026 Kalamazoo Central Homecoming Court.

The Loy Norrix Athletics Hall of Fame Returns

THERE'S a lot to celebrate when it comes to Kalamazoo Public Schools, and this year Loy Norrix Athletics brought back its Hall of Fame Ceremony.

This year's celebration happened the Thursday before homecoming, and was hosted by Athletic Director April Rocco with the help of several current Loy Norrix athletics students. Inductees attended a ceremony with family and friends where they received an award to mark their legacy. Inductees spanned from the class of 1970 to 2016.

2026 INDUCTEES:

David Koelbel, Class of 1970: Koelbel served as football team manager and varsity baseball team manager during his time in high school. After graduating, he returned to serve as football statistician from 1972-1988. In 1989, Koelbel was named Assistant Athletic Director and held the role for 20 years until he retired in 2008. He's credited with creating and maintaining the varsity football record book. He also maintains the men's varsity basketball, men's swimming, and women's swimming record books, along with a record of all team and individual championships and runner-ups.

Melissa McCormick, Class of 1999: McCormick was a four-year starter and three-time captain for Loy Norrix volleyball. She was named two-time Most Valuable Player, Female Athlete of the Year, along with several All-State appearances. She went on to play at Miami University Ohio where she served as team captain and achieved accomplishments including Academic All-MAC Selection in 2001 and MAC East Division Player of the Week in 2003.

Evie Linebaugh, Class of 1993: Evie was a three-sport athlete — volleyball, tennis, and track. She and tennis partner Amy Hudgins won the State Championship in both Doubles and Team Tennis in 1991. She went on to attend WMU on a volleyball scholarship and now is a teacher at El Sol Elementary.

Linda Riker, Class of 1994: Linda was a proud member of the Loy Norrix swim team, being named a Class A All-State Swimmer for the 200 freestyle and 100 backstroke in 1993. She achieved major success at the University of Michigan with 12 NCAA All-American honors and a Big Ten 200m backstroke championship in 1998. On the global stage, she ranked among the top five swimmers in the world, placing third in the World University Games and reaching the semifinals and finals in the 2000 U.S. Olympic Trials. Riker went on to serve in leadership roles with USA Swimming until 2010.

Chad Schmitt, Class of 2004: Schmitt was a 2004 Wrestling State Champion in Weight Class 103 with 9 wins, 4 losses.

Jason Buss, Class of 2006: Buss is credited with spearheading the movement to make bowling an MHSAA sport at Loy Norrix. He was a bowling State Individual Qualifier and part of the State Championship team in 2006. He also made All-Conference Baseball and All-Conference Football.

Brian Jean, Class of 2006: Jean was a State Bowling Individual Qualifier and a Final Four Finisher. He was part of the 2006 State Championship team.

Preston Miller, Class of 2006: Miller was part of the 2006 Bowling State Championship team.

Cetera Digovanni, Class of 2007: Digovanni was captain of the Loy Norrix women's basketball team. She set a school record with 767 points her senior year and 1,815 career points. She received national recognition as the 2006 Associated Press Class A Player of the Year. After high school, she went to MSU where she was team captain her senior year and a member of the 2011 Big Ten Championship Team.

JR Reese, Class of 2008: Reese was a two-time State Bowling Individual Qualifier and part of the 2006 State Championship team for bowling.

Nelly Smith, Class of 2008: Smith played both varsity basketball and volleyball. She was Loy Norrix High School's Female Athlete of the Year in 2008, and is in the 1,000 point club, ranking as the fourth leading scorer in school history. She attended U of M for basketball and earned her varsity letter, then moved to Northwood University as starter and team captain.

Barrett Kelpin, Class of 2008: Kelpin set record golf scores for both the 9-hole (32) and 18-hole (64) at Loy Norrix High School. He continued his success as an All Big 10 First Team player in 2012.

Talisha Bridges, Class of 2009: Bridges was a four-sport athlete in high school — volleyball, basketball, track and field, and softball — earning 12 letters total. She earned top honors for her basketball skills and in academics. She scored more than 1,200 points in

(continued on page 11)

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Loy Norrix Athletics Hall of Fame *(continued from page 10)*



Loy Norrix Athletics Hall of Fame Inductees, Class of 2026:

her high school career, ranking as the third-highest scorer in Loy Norrix history. She continued her college athletics career at several schools, including Wayne State University where she was named Most Valuable Player and served as team captain. She new serves as Athletic Director at Phoenix High School.

Ondrea Hughes, Class of 2010: Hughes was a high school basketball star who scored more than 1,300 points, the second most in Loy Norrix High School History. Her dominant play earned her top honors in the state, including being named Conference Player of the Year her sophomore and senior years. After high school, she took her skills to the college level at Cleveland State University, then transferred to Wayne State University where she appeared in two NCAA Tournament games.

Bishop Robinson, Class of 2013: Robinson was a three-sport athlete: football, basketball and track. He was an All-State Basketball player for the Knights. He is the single game, season, and overall point leader. He also holds the record for most rebounds in a season, and was All-State in the high jump.

Jay McIntosh, Class of 2014: McIntosh was a four-sport athlete during his time at Loy Norrix: football, basketball, soccer, and track. He was also part of the All-State Soccer 1st team with 80 goals in three years. McIntosh went on to play for both Indiana University and WMU with two NCAA Sweet 16 appearances, an All-MAC First Team, and NCAA National D1 Player of the Week.

Davis Crocker, Class of 2014: Crocker was one of Michigan's top high school tennis players with a career record of 108-11, an undefeated senior season, and three state championship titles. His hard work earned him the 2013 National High School Tennis All-American Award and the MHSAA Mr. Tennis 2013 award. That success continued with Big Ten championships in singles and doubles play while at the University of Michigan, as well as the Big Ten Sportsmanship Award.

Jane Labadie, Class of 2016: Labadie was an All-State, All-Conference, and All-District soccer player while at Loy Norrix. She went on to WMU for four years to play soccer.

Grace Labadie, Class of 2016: Labadie was a prolific goal scorer in soccer, All-Conference, All-State, and All-Academic athlete. She was an Indiana University recruit and eventually joined her sister Jane at WMU.

Nick May, Class of 2016: May was an All-State wrestler and an All-Conference football player. He went on to wrestle at MSU.

49th Annual Mary Calletto Rife Youth Literature Seminar



Derrick Barnes

Award-winning author celebrating joy, confidence, and childhood.



Maya Payne Smart

Literacy advocate and author of *Reading for Our Lives*

Thursday, November 5 - Meet Derrick Barnes | 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Northside Association for Community Development | 612 N. Park St., 49007
Families are invited to hear about his creative process and celebrate the joy of reading together. Free and open to the public.

Friday, November 6 - Youth Literature Seminar - Online | 9:00 am - 3:30 pm
Join us for a live online event celebrating family literacy and the power of reading to strengthen families and communities. Registration required.

Saturday, November 7 - First Saturday with Maya Payne Smart | 10:30 am - 12:00 pm
Central Library | 315 S. Rose St., 49007
The November First Saturday with Promise to Read featuring Maya Payne Smart. Open to all. Kalamazoo Public School teachers will earn free SCECHs for attending.

kpl.gov/youth-literature-seminar

Kalamazoo Public Library

Learning About the Library!

EACH YEAR, Kalamazoo Public Schools first graders get to make a trip to the Kalamazoo Public Library. As part of the trip, students get to learn how to find books they're interested in, scour the shelves themselves, and even check out their own book (with approval from their teacher, of course).

Introducing children to the library helps them build important skills: they get exposure to new topics that span the shelves, independence of making a choice of their own, practice the responsibility of checking out a book and knowing it has a due date, and learn about the fun activities held in the community space. Students take part in a craft and a story time as part of their visit, as well.

Another important part of these visits: encouraging reading! More frequent reading has been linked to higher test scores along with improved communication skills, memory, critical thinking skills, writing skills, and analytical skills. It also encourages empathy and can even decrease stress levels.



King-Westwood first graders scour the shelves at the KPL Oshtemo Branch.







Don't Miss Loy Norrix High School's Fall Musical: "The Drowsy Chaperone"!

"The Drowsy Chaperone" is a five-time Tony Award-winning musical. A tribute to the Jazz Age musicals of the 1920s, a theatre fan puts on a record of his favorite cast album. Then the characters, including lovers on the eve of their wedding, gangsters posing as pastry chefs, and a producer who wants to sabotage the big day, come to life!

DATES AND SHOWTIMES:

December 4, 5, 6, 10 & 11 at 7 p.m.

December 6 & 12 at 2 p.m.

Loy Norrix Auditorium

TICKETS:

$12 for adults / $8 for students & seniors

Tickets can be purchased at the box office or online at loynorrix.ludus.com.

MAMMA MIA!™

Kalamazoo Central High School Presents its Fall Musical: "Mamma Mia!"

This musical features the story of a daughter trying to find her potential father while preparing for her own wedding, and a mother's memories of love — all set on a beautiful Greek island to the hits of iconic pop group ABBA , including "Dancing Queen" and "Take a Chance on Me."

DATES AND SHOWTIMES:

November 13, 14, 19, 20 & 21 at 7 p.m.

November 15 at 3 p.m.

Kalamazoo Central Auditorium

TICKETS:

$12 for adults

$10 for students & senior citizens

$35 for a Family Pack (includes up to two adults and three children age 12 and under)

Tickets can be purchased at kcperformingarts.ludus.com.



ARTISTS' CORNER

Mr. Pfeuffer's fourth grade artists at Arcadia Elementary celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by drawing Aztec suns. Artists found inspiration from the Mayan calendar to help come up with their ideas. Students learned about radial symmetry by designing different patterns, shapes, and designs. At Arcadia Elementary we are proud of our diverse population of students from all over the world.



Cynthia Ivens



Henrietta Johnson



Ma'Kai Strecker



Maximus Gainey



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If you're struggling to pay your water bill, we can help.

The City of Kalamazoo is making critical investments in our water and wastewater systems. These investments are funded by all of us through the rates we pay. Rates in Kalamazoo remain low compared to other communities, but we understand that rising costs may create hardships for some households. Financial and other aid options are listed below.

Payment plans and due date extensions are available. Call 311 or (269) 337-8000 for help. The Community Action Agency of Southwest Michigan can help low-income households pay overdue bills. Call 211 or 1-877-422-2726 for more information.

Consumers Energy offers a free home analysis that can help customers save money by reducing energy and water consumption. Call 1-888-316-8014 for more information.

www.kalamazoocity.org/UtilityHelp

Si necesita ayuda para pagar su factura de agua o alcantarillado, hay ayuda disponible. Para obtener informaci6n en es aiiol, el llame al 311 o al 269 337-8000.

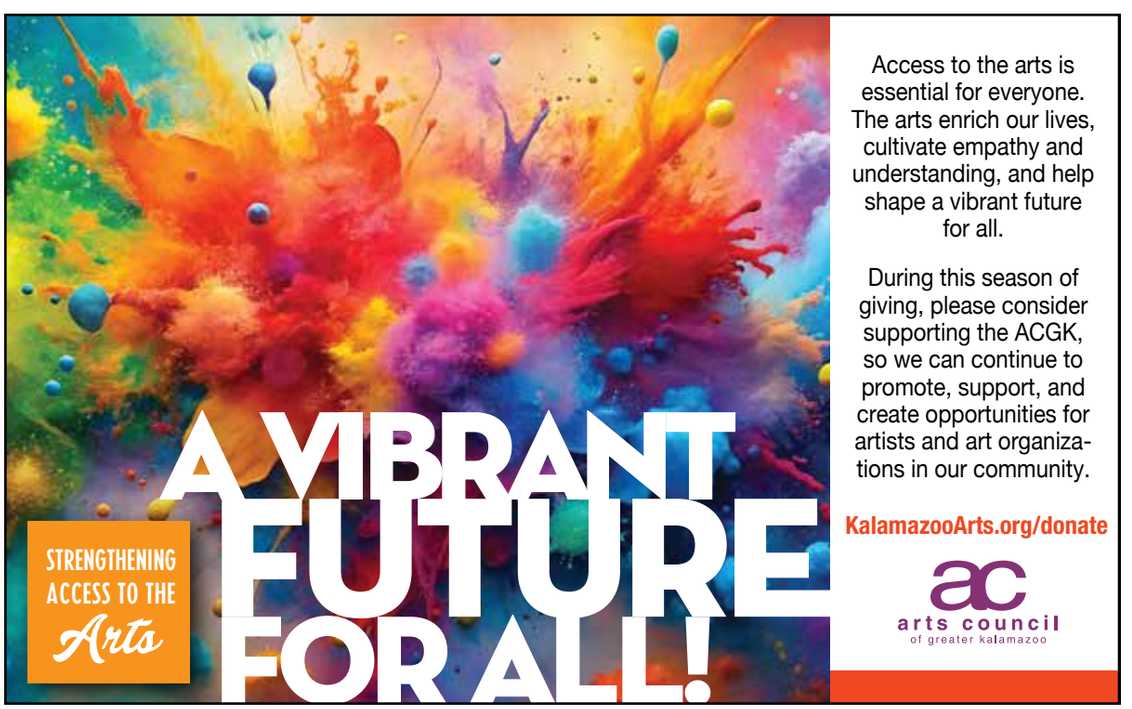
A New School Year with ATYP

KALAMAZOO Public School middle schoolers in grades six and seven who are looking to challenge themselves in English or math are invited to learn more about the Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP)! ATYP is part of Western Michigan University's Office of Pre-College Programming, and offers advanced and accelerated courses in math and English beginning in seventh or eighth grade. Students in sixth and seventh grade will receive a letter or email from the ATYP office encouraging them to test for qualification for the 2027-28 school year.

ATYP is hosting an informational presentation at Western Michigan University on Sunday, November 22 at 4:00 p.m. in Sangren Hall. Students and parents can learn about the process for qualifying for the program and potentially becoming a participating student. Topics covered in the meeting will include qualifying, program logistics, and costs.

Please visit the website, wmich.edu/precollege/atyp, for more information about the program, or feel free to email at atyp-info@wmich.edu or call (269) 387-3553 if you have additional questions.

The Academically Talented Youth Program is operated by Western Michigan University. The program is separate from Kalamazoo Public Schools and KPS does not control the program's curriculum, instruction or assessment. Transportation to ATYP is the responsibility of the guardian of the student.







WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE Kalamazoo VALLEY Museum

EVENT THURSDAY, NOV. 5 | 6 - 8:30 P.M. | FREE



A MOVIE AND SOME MUSIC

Don't miss the groovy vibes of the 2026 documentary film, "Earth, Wind & Fire." It explores the impact of the band Earth, Wind & Fire and its founder, Maurice White. The evening kicks off with a live music performance by Yolonda Lavender. Curated by Soul Artistry LLC.

EVENT FRIDAY, NOV. 20 | 1:30 - 2:30 P.M. | FREE

ILLUSTRATED MUSE(INGS)

Step into an afternoon of creation with a gathering of artists creating in real time. It's a space where melody meets mark making, rhythm inspires gesture, and the room becomes a living sketchbook.



EVENT TUESDAYS, SEPT. 15 - NOV. 17 | 6:30 - 7:30 P.M. | FREE

THE HONORABLE HARVEST LECTURE SERIES - FALL 2026



Enjoy weekly talks examining ways we can restore the tenets of reciprocity with the natural world. In partnership with the museum, these drop-in lectures are held at Kalamazoo Valley Community College's **Marilyn J. Schlack Culinary and Allied Health Building**, 418 Walnut St., downtown Kalamazoo. View a list of topics at **valleyhub.kvcc.edu/events**.

CONCERT FRIDAY, DEC. 4 | 6 P.M. & 7:15 P.M. | FREE

ART HOP: KALAMAZOO MANDOLIN AND GUITAR ORCHESTRA

Experience the magic of the season with a live performance of classic and contemporary holiday music by the KMGO at the December Art Hop, hosted by the museum.



EVENT SATURDAY, NOV. 7 | 1 - 3 P.M. | FREE

150 YEARS OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY: CHEMISTRY IS EVERYTHING

Celebrate 150 years of the American Chemical Society with local history, exciting hands-on science experiences and a free planetarium show, "Elements in Orbit," at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

EVENT SATURDAY, NOV. 21 | 11:30 A.M. - 2 P.M. | FREE

PARADE DAY: WINTER WORKSHOP

Celebrate the season with festive fun for the whole family! Explore hands-on winter craft activities and enjoy free "Let It Snow" planetarium shows at 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.



NEW EXHIBIT NOW - JAN. 3, 2027 | FREE

TOYTOPIA



Learn about the origins of toys, who made them, and why they are fun and dear to us. Toytopia satisfies the curiosity of visitors of all ages with beautiful, compelling and informative displays. *Toytopia was created by Stage 9 Exhibits.*

PLANETARIUM EXPERIENCE | NOV. SHOWS | $3 PER PERSON

Visit **kalamazoomuseum.org** for details.
***NOTE: "Elements in Orbit" shows are free on Saturday, Nov. 7, at 1 & 2 p.m. "Let It Snow" shows are free on Saturday, Nov. 21, at 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m.**



ONE WORLD, ONE SKY | 11 A.M. SAT.
30 MIN. | GRADES 3 & UP
EXPEDITION SOLAR SYSTEM | 1 P.M. SAT.
35 MIN. | ALL AGES
MAGIC TREE HOUSE: SPACE MISSION | 1 P.M. SUN.
35 MIN. | GRADES 3 & UP
THE SKY ABOVE US | 2 P.M. TUES. - SUN.
35 MIN. | GRADES 4 & UP



SPECIAL NOTICE: Museum closed Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27.

HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday | Noon - 4 p.m.

FREE GENERAL ADMISSION

Note: Some areas of the museum may be closed due to exhibit changes, staffing needs, special programs or collections care. We thank you for your patience.

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees.

Kalamazoo VALLEY Museum

230 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo
kalamazoomuseum.org | 269.373.7990