**(Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons)**

**Mary Idema Pew** was born Mary Bonnell Idema, daughter of Steelcase, Inc. founder Walter Idema and his wife Mary. She attended Grand Rapids Public Schools and graduated from Kemper Hall in Kenosha, Wisconsin. She went on to join the U.S. Navy Women Accepted for Volunteer Experience (WAVE), where she trained pilots to use Link Flight Simulators during World War II. After two-and-a-half years in the Navy she continued to blaze trails for future generations by becoming one of the first women undergraduate students at the traditionally all-male college, Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Therefore it is appropriate that this, the first privately funded building at Grand Valley State University named for a woman, be named for her. Her husband Robert C. Pew II said, “My wife cared about education because of what it could do for peoples’ lives…her compassion was with everyday people. We know this library will benefit everyone in the region as it raises the academic achievement of Grand Valley students.”

**Robert (Bob) C. Pew II** served as President of Steelcase, Inc. from 1966-74 and chaired the Board of Directors from 1974 until his retirement in 1999 when he was named Chairman Emeritus. A prominent member of the citizen’s group that established the Grand Valley State University charter, Bob Pew was instrumental in chairing the committee that raised over nine million dollars to build and equip the L.V. Eberhard Center. Pew was a member of the Grand Valley Board of Trustees from 1985 to 1988, and shortly after that he donated 10 acres of real estate that were pivotal in expanding the downtown Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus, named for him in honor of his long-term commitment of both time and financial resources to the university.

**Thomas E. Beckering** was the third generation owner of Pioneer Construction. He was influential in propelling Pioneer Construction to become one of the largest full-service construction companies in the Midwest.

**Peter C. Cook** established Mazda Great Lakes, the first and only independent direct distributorship in the U.S. until Mazda bought it back. In addition to his business ventures, he enjoyed playing the trumpet, and had a love for Dixie bands. Peter was inducted into the GVSU Hall of Fame in honor of his many contributions to the growth of the university. He believed strongly in giving back to his community stating that, “There are two necessary things in giving: one is to be willing, the other is to be able. Able is secondary because many people who are not willing to do become able but still never give. People who have little yet give what they can become the big givers because they are able. That’s because they had always been willing.”

**Richard (Rich) M. DeVos** co-founded Amway Corporation with his best friend, Jay Van Andel in 1959, and today Amway is one of the world's largest direct selling businesses. A renowned speaker, Rich has appeared before hundreds of thousands of audience members worldwide. He has written four books: *BELIEVE!,* *Compassionate Capitalism*, *Hope From My Heart: Ten Lessons for Life*, and *Ten Powerful Phrases for Positive People,* has received numerous awards, and holds fourteen honorary doctorate degrees from various colleges and universities across the country. In 1991, Rich and his family acquired a National Basketball Association franchise, the Orlando Magic, of which he is Chairman.

Rich and his wife, Helen, have played an integral role in the growth and success of Grand Valley State University for several decades. In addition to their generous financial support, they have served in leadership roles for many capital campaigns; Rich served as President of the Grand Valley University Foundation from 1991-2003 and was then appointed General Chairman. Helen was selected to serve on the Foundation’s Advisory Cabinet in 2011. Rich and Helen have led every capital campaign at Grand Valley State University since the 1990s, and continue to support the university with their time, talent, and treasure. Rich and Helen’s leadership extends beyond Grand Valley, throughout West Michigan. They are tremendous supporters of the arts and health care, including the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra and the Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital. It is largely because of Rich and Helen that West Michigan continues to grow and thrive.

**L.V. Eberhard** was the founder of Eberhard Foods and spent more the 70 years in the grocery business. In 1988, Eberhard made a gift to Grand Valley State University for the expansion of the downtown campus, and financed a scholarship for students in need. He was a member of the Grand Valley University Foundation Advisory Cabinet form 1989 to 1991, and received the Enrichment Award in 1988 for his contributions to the university and the community.

**Fred M. Keller** was a business leader, innovator and philanthropist who was born on St. Patrick’s Day in 1910. In 1962, he became the owner of Paragon Die & Engineering for a one dollar purchase price, and among his innovations was the single-action flush lever, which he patented. Throughout his life, Keller received many awards including the Enrichment Award from Grand Valley State University in 2000, Man of the Year by Junior Achievement, the Outstanding United Methodist Philanthropist by the United Methodist Church in West Michigan and the Distinguished Service Award from Ferris State University. Keller generously provided funds to construct Grand Valley’s Fred M. Keller Engineering Laboratories, and gave his time to the university as a member of the Grand Valley University Foundation’s Advisory Cabinet from 1999 until his passing in 2004.

**John C. Kennedy III** holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Detroit Mercy and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Michigan. An accountant and business manager, he joined Autodie Corporation of Grand Rapids as Chief Financial Officer in 1982. He left Autodie in 1988 to found Autocam Corporation. John has twice been appointed to the Grand Valley State University Board of Trustees, in 2002 for a two year term, and again in 2011 for an eight year term. In addition, Kennedy is a Grand Valley University Foundation (GVUF) Director and chaired the campaigns to raise money for the John C. Kennedy Hall of Engineering and the Meijer Public Broadcast Center. In 2002, John received the GVUF Leadership Award, and has also been inducted into the West Michigan Business Hall of Fame. In 2012 he and his wife Nancy received the Jack Chaille Community Philanthropy Award from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

**Ambassador Peter F. Secchia** was the U.S. Ambassador to Italy from 1989 to 1993, was honored in 1994 as Michigan’s Entrepreneur of the Year, and was named Businessman of the Year by Grand Rapids Economic Club in 1995. Peter was an influential leader in the building and renewal of Grand Rapids. He serves on the executive committee of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, and is on the Board of Trustees of the Bush Presidential Library Foundation in addition to his position on the Grand Valley University Foundation board of directors. Peter is a proud graduate of Michigan State University and he received an honorary Doctorate of Law from Grand Valley State University in 1991. As part of his Grand Rapids Community Legends Project, he gave the bronze sculpture of Chief Noonday that is located near the Blue Bridge and L.V. Eberhard Center at Grand Valley.

**Steelcase Inc.** was founded in Grand Rapids in 1912 and has become one of the world’s largest furniture manufacturers. Steelcase donated a substantial portion of land to Grand Valley State University that became part of the Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus. The company has always believed in supporting its community through its beliefs and values stating that, “Bbeing a good neighbor is just an important part of being a good company.”

**Alexander Calder** is the American sculptor credited with inventing the mobile. He also created prolific paintings, lithographs, toys, tapestry and jewelry. One of his most famous sculptures is the “La Grand Vitesse” which still stands in downtown Grand Rapids. La Grand Vitesse was the first public art in the United States that was funded with federal money, being financed by the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Arthur C. Hills** was part of the original faculty at Grand Valley State University, and in 1963 he was charged with creating an arts curriculum and organized arts activities for all students. In the spring of 1964, he produced the Arts on Campus series for students and the community. He is renowned for creating the Grand Valley alma mater, “Hail to Thee Grand Valley.”  He remained an active member of the Grand Valley community until the day he retired in 1988. Hills passed away in 2013.

**Dr. Icie Macy Hoobler** was a scientist, an educator, a leader, and an author. She was the first woman president of the American Chemical Society. Her work included leading the Nutrition Research Project for the Merrill-Palmer School in Detroit, where she studied the effects of various foods on the growth and well-being of children. Hoobler served as a member of the first Grand Valley State College Board of Control between 1960 and 1968, and was awarded an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters by the university.

**James M. Copeland** served as a member of the Grand Valley State College Board of Control between 1960 and 1964 where he was instrumental in starting the Grand Valley State College Library. He worked to raise money for the university charter from those who lived and worked in counties outside of Kent County. As a businessman, he was the President of Security National Bank in Manistee as well as the President of the Wyoming State Bank in Grand Rapids.

**Edward J. Frey Sr.**, best known for his leadership and entrepreneurial spirit, was the Founder and Board Chairman of Foremost Insurance, and CEO of Union Bank and Trust Company. He served on the first Grand Valley State College Board of Control from 1960 to 1968, was Finance Chair for the initial fundraising campaign to establish the university charter, and played an integral role in the hiring of the university’s first president, James H. Zumberge. Frey was active in supporting United Way, the Greater Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, and with his wife, Frances, established the Frey Foundation in 1974 to help fund the arts, education, economic development, and to help improve the lives of women and children.

**Paul A. Johnson** was born on December 23, 1919 in Muskegon, Michigan and received a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan. In 1941, he began his World War II military service as a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy, and married Charlotte Albertine in September 1942. When he returned from the war in 1945 he became co-owner of Dake, a Grand Haven hydraulic-press manufacturer, and also started working for the Kent County Road Commission. Johnson was named County Director of Road Maintenance in 1978, a post he held until 1986. He also served on Grand Valley State University’s Board of Control for 26 years, making him the university’s longest-serving board member. Johnson was first appointed to the board by Governor George Romney in 1968. Upon his retirement in 1994, Grand Valley awarded him an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities. Johnson passed away on December 18, 2003 at the age of 83.

**Russel H. Kirkhof** was known as Grand Rapids’ electronic genius, inventor and businessman. His father passed away when he was just ten years of age, and Kirkhof left school after the 7th grade to work for the Lewis Electric Company. After several positions and a stint in the army doing electrical work on airplanes in France, Kirhof came home to work for his old employer Lewis Electric Company. In 1925, he opened his own electrical shop in Grand Rapids, and landed contracts with Consumers Power and GM. Due to a friendship with John Scherff, who tended the grounds at his home and eventually became employed at Grand Valley State Colleges, Kirkhof gifted the college one million dollars and his home upon his death in 1979.

**William Kirkpatrick** was born in Maine and attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1932. After graduation, he served as technical director at Allied Paper Corporation in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He was vice-president of the corporation from 1953-1958, and led the corporation when it purchased the Kalamazoo Box Company. Kirkpatrick served as a member of the Grand Valley State College Board of Control from 1960 to 1978. He was instrumental in developing Western Michigan University's paper science and engineering programs. He also served on the board of Goodwill Industries. Kirkpatrick and his wife, Frances, raised three children.

**President Emeritus Arend (Don) Lubbers** was Grand Valley State University’s highly celebrated president from its youth in 1969 to its modern image in 2001. After receiving his Bachelor’s Degree from Hope College and Masters from Rutgers University, Don taught at Wittenberg College in Ohio and then returned to Rutgers in 1958 to pursue a doctorate. In 1960, he was appointed President of Central College in Pella, Iowa at the age of 29, becoming the youngest college president in the nation. Two years later, the young academic attracted national attention when Life magazine included him in its "Red-Hot Hundred," profiling 100 outstanding American leaders under 40. Don was still among the youngest college presidents in the nation when he assumed the Presidency at Grand Valley in January 1969. During his tenure, Grand Valley saw the construction of academic buildings and residence halls in Allendale, the Meijer Campus in Holland, and the Eberhard Center and Richard M. DeVos Center in Grand Rapids. The university also extended its service with programs in Muskegon and Traverse City in cooperation with local community colleges. Don led efforts to establish the Seidman College of Business, the Kirkhof College of Nursing, and the Schools of Education, Social Work, Health Sciences, Engineering, and Communication. Also during his tenure, GVSU’s programs in music, art, chemistry, education, social work, business, and nursing have earned professional accreditations. When Don retired in 2001, he was the longest-serving public university president in the country.

**Mark A. Murray** became the third president of Grand Valley State University on July 1, 2001. He left Grand Valley in 2006 to become President of Meijer, Inc, a position he held until 2013 when he was named Co-Chief Executive Officer. Before arriving at Grand Valley, Mark served as State Treasurer and Education Policy Advisor to Governor John Engler from 1999 to 2001. Prior to his appointment to that office, the lifelong Michigan resident spent more than 20 years in various state government leadership positions, including Deputy Director for Budget from 1991 to 1994, State Budget Director from 1994 to 1998, and posts in the departments of social services, commerce, and management.

**Seymour K. Padnos** served in the United States Army during World War II.  After the war, he joined his father and brother in the family business, the Louis Padnos Iron & Metal Company. Seymour graduated from Hope College with a Bachelor of Arts degree and has received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from GVSU. Through the Esther and Seymour Padnos Foundation, Seymour generously supports many projects. He was involved with the engineering program at Grand Valley from its beginnings in the mid-1980s. Seymour joined the Grand Valley University Foundation (GVUF) Board in 1981 and he became a part of the GVUF Advisory Cabinet in 1996. In 1988, Seymour was inducted into the Grand Valley State University Hall of Fame. In 2011, the university presented both Seymour and his wife Esther with the Grand Steward Award. In addition to the Seymour and Esther Padnos Hall of Science, the Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering and Science at Grand Valley State University are named in their honor.

**Robert Kleiner** served on the Grand Valley State University Board of Trustees between 1983 and 1987. He was a practicing attorney as well as a supporter of the Democratic Party, acting as a Democratic National Convention Delegate in 1964, 1968, and 1976. Kleiner served as legal advisor for the Kent County Democratic Party and the Fifth District Democratic Committee. In addition to his political service, he was involved with the Grand Rapids Art Museum Board and Fountain Street Church.

**Grace Olsen Kistler** is best remembered as a gracious woman leader. Born in 1899, she graduated from the University of Kansas and then received a Master’s Degree in Journalism from Columbia University, married John J. Kistler in 1963, and then took up residence in Grand Haven, Michigan in 1940. Along with her service to the Grand Valley State College Board of Control from 1960 to 1967, Kistler was a committed volunteer to the Ottawa County Red Cross, First Presbyterian Church in Grand Haven, and the State Federation of Women’s Clubs in Michigan.

**Ella Koeze Weed** was born in in Grand Rapids, Michigan and graduated from Grand Rapids South High School and Davenport Business College. She was married to Albert Koeze in 1933, and together they managed a successful peanut butter factory until his passing in 1966. In 1973, she married Harold Weed. Throughout her lifetime, she was closely involved in politics, known as a woman for all other women in politics to follow. She was elected to Michigan’s Constitutional Convention in 1961, and in 1971 was appointed Chairman of the National Alliance of Businessmen. She had close friendships with influential Republicans including President Gerald R. Ford and former Governor George Romney. Ella was also involved with Grand Valley State College in its beginnings as an appointee to the Board of Control from 1967 to 1981. While on the Board of Control, she took occasional classes at the college, saying, “I love the school partly because I learn so much from the kids. They are so far ahead of where I was at their age.”

**Dr. Glenn A. Niemeyer** was born in Muskegon, Michigan, received a Bachelor’s Degree from Calvin College, and then both a Master’s Degree and a Ph.D. in History from Michigan State University. He was one of the first faculty members appointed at Grand Valley in 1963, serving as the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences between 1970 and 1976, Vice President for Academic Affairs between 1976 and 1980, and Provost between 1980 and 2001. His accomplished career included chairing the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission, and serving as Vice President and then President of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In April 1994, Niemeyer was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Grand Valley.

**The Loutit Foundation** was formed in 1957 by William R. Loutit. The Loutit family has ties to Grand Haven and Spring Lake that date back to 1856 when Captain William R. Loutit settled in the area and grew a lumber and shipping business. They were huge supporters of Grand Valley State University’s construction of a new science building—making Grand Valley the first and only public institution to receive funding from the foundation at the time.

**Kenneth W. Robinson** was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he attended Central High School. Robinson dedicated his entire life to public service—he worked for the UAW from 1944 to 1974; was appointed to the Grand Valley State College Board of Control in 1960-64, reappointed from 1968-1972, and again in 1973 until his death in 1976; and was a Delegate at several Democratic National Conventions. He played an integral role in establishing the charter of Grand Valley, which led to the dormitory being named in his honor.

**Dale Stafford** was an accomplished journalist and newspaper publisher and served on the Grand Valley State College Board of Control from 1960-1968. His journalism career began in high school, when he was a correspondent for the Lansing State Journal and sports writer for the Lansing Capital News. After high school, Stafford enrolled at Michigan State University where he was selected to be the university’s first Athletic Publicity Director. His professional career included jobs with the Pontiac Press, Associated Press and the Detroit Free Press, and ultimately he became the Editor and Publisher of the Greenville Daily News, President of the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, and National President of the Michigan State University Alumni Association.

**Arnold C. Ott** Arnold C. Ott was born in 1917 in Clare, Michigan and grew up working on his family’s farm. While attending nearby Central Michigan University he met his wife Marion P. Nickels and received his B.S. degree in chemistry/physics/mathematics. He founded the Ott Chemical Company in 1956, in Muskegon, Michigan. In his lifetime, he authored over 50 foreign and domestic patents and served as Vice President and Scientific Director of The Corn Products Company International in New York City. He served on many boards of directors and was a science consultant to the Amway Corporation. Dr. Ott and his wife Marion were actively involved in the success of Grand Valley State University from its very earliest days. He worked with his good friend William “Bill” Seidman in 1960 to help found the university, and he served on the Board of Control for over 29 years, making him the longest serving board member of a state university in the State of Michigan. They established the Arnold C. Ott Lectureship in Chemistry in 2001 and endowed the Hilda C. Holder Scholarship for Women in Business in 2004. The university recognized Dr. Ott’s legacy by naming the Arnold C. Ott Living Center after him in 1987 and inducting him into the Grand Valley Hall of Fame in 2004. In 2011, their daughter Jackie and her husband Les Stiner continued their family’s philanthropic tradition by establishing the Ott-Stiner Fellowship in Chemistry and Natural Sciences at Grand Valley.

**Dr. William F. Pickard** was born in La Grange, Georgia and moved to Flint, Michigan in 1958. He became active in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was a well-known leader, entrepreneur, and college professor. In 1972, Pickard moved to Detroit to oversee an investment in a McDonald’s franchise that would later expand to six restaurants. He also bought Regal Plastics, turning it into one of the area’s largest black-owned businesses. Grand Valley State College awarded him an honorary degree in 1972, and he was appointed by the governor to the college’s Board of Control in 1976 and again in 1981, serving until 1988. Pickard has remained active in the NAACP and resides in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

**Maxine M. Swanson** was born in Wisconsin but later moved to Alma, Michigan, where she was employed as a Nurse, Patient Care Coordinator, and finally Executive Assistant to the President and Director of Clinical Data at Gratiot Community Hospital. She was also very active with the Republican Party in her county – began as Precinct Delegate, then Gratiot County Executive Committee, then Chairman of President Ford campaign. Swanson was a member the League of Women Voters, Coalition to Women’s Assembly, Michigan Republican Women’s Task Force, United Way, Alma Symphony, Sierra Club, and Michigan Society for Mental Health. She also served as a member of the Grand Valley State College Board of Control between 1981 and 1990.

**Paul B. Henry** was born in Chicago, Illinois, lived in California during his high school years, and then attended Wheaton College in Illinois. After college, he joined the Peace Corps as a volunteer in Liberia and Ethiopia between 1963 and 1965, and then went back to earn his Master’s degree and Ph.D. from Duke University. Henry arrived in Michigan as a professor of political science at Calvin College until he was elected to the Michigan State House of Representatives in 1979, followed by the Michigan State Senate in 1983. In 1984, Henry was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served until his death in 1993.

**L. William “Bill” Seidman** formed the Committee to Establish a Four-Year College in 1958, which would become the first step in the formation of Grand Valley State University. For the next two years, Bill and his wife, Sally, hosted meetings and parties in their home and across Western Michigan, asking friends and community leaders to get involved and make this vision a reality. In 1960, Grand Valley’s charter was signed by the State of Michigan and Bill’s “high hopes” were fulfilled. Bill and Sally remained an integral part of the Grand Valley family for the duration of their lives. Bill Seidman’s leadership extended far beyond Western Michigan. He served as an adviser to Presidents Gerald R. Ford and Ronald Reagan, and later headed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. He and Sally founded The Washington Campus in Washington, D.C., a consortium of business schools across the country dedicated to educating business leaders on the public policy process. In his later years, he became the Chief Financial Commentator for the CNBC business cable network, and continued to advise businesses and governments throughout the world.

Even with all of these extraordinary life accomplishments, Bill often stated that the founding of Grand Valley State University was his proudest achievement.

**Frederik G.H. Meijer**, son of Dutch immigrants Hendrik and Gezina Meijer, was 14 when his father opened a small grocery store. Through Fred’s leadership and that of many trusted associates, Meijer, Inc. has grown to a chain of more than 200 discount retail stores in five states. Fred and his wife Lena’s belief in philanthropy has helped enrich West Michigan, including Grand Valley State University. From the Meijer Public Broadcasting Center to the Meijer Campus in Holland and the Frederik Meijer Honors College in Allendale, Fred and Lena’s generosity has contributed to the growth and success of the university. They have also made generous gifts to the community, including the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, the Fred and Lena Meijer Heart Center, and the Lemmen-Holton Cancer Pavilion at Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids. The Meijer legacy has a lasting impact on lives throughout West Michigan, the region, and the nation.

**Brian Kelly**, current head football coach at the University of Notre Dame, was the head football coach at Grand Valley State University for 13 years, leading the Lakers to NCAA DII national championships in 2002 and 2003. He led GVSU to five Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) titles and six NCAA Division II playoff appearances. Brian and his wife, Paqui, met while both were employed at Grand Valley—he was an assistant football coach and she worked in the Financial Aid Department. Paqui received a master's degree in education from Grand Valley in 1998. Patrick, Grace and Kenzel, the three Kelly children, were born while Brian was the head football coach at GVSU and enjoyed participating in campus activities with their parents. Kelly was inducted into the GVSU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009, was the head coach at Central Michigan for three years (2004-06) and at the University of Cincinnati for three years (2007-09).

**Marvin G. DeWitt** started Bil Mar Foods, Inc. when he and his brother paid $60 for 17 turkeys, which eventually would become one of the country’s top three producers of turkey before being sold to the Sara Lee Corporation in 1987. Known for most of his life as “Mr. Turkey,” DeWitt left a legacy of philanthropy and strong work ethic after he passed away in 2011. He was an avid hunter, and before he passed away, he took 23 of his grandchildren to South Africa on a big-game hunting trip. Marvin and his wife, Jerene, were very generous to their community, citing the many blessings they were given by God. He also served on the Zeeland School Board, the Ottawa County Road Commission, the Board of Northwestern College in Iowa, and gave his time as a member of the Grand Valley University Foundation’s Advisory Cabinet between 2002 and 2009.

**Ronald F. VanSteeland** began his career at Grand Valley State University as the first Personnel Officer, and was charged with establishing a Personnel Department. In 1968 he was named the university’s Business Manager, was promoted to Vice President of the university in 1973, and in 1979 became the Vice President for Finance and Administration at GVSU, a position he held until his retirement in 2001. Under his leadership, Grand Valley became one of the “Top 100 Best Buys” in the United States. VanSteeland had an interest in environmental causes, which led him to help start the Grand Valley Arboretum and then went on to join the Board of the West Michigan Environmental Action Council between 2006 and 2008.

**James H. Zumberge**, a Minnesota native, first arrived in Michigan as a professor of Geology at the University of Michigan, from where he was plucked to become the first President of Grand Valley State College in 1963. Zumberge remained at Grand Valley until 1969, became President of Southern Methodist University, and then the fourth President of the University of California. As an educator, he led expeditions to Antarctica, where Cape Zumberge and Zumberge Coast are named for him. At Grand Valley, the Zumberge Library and Zumberge Pond on the Allendale Campus have both been named in recognition of his leadership in the first decade at the university.