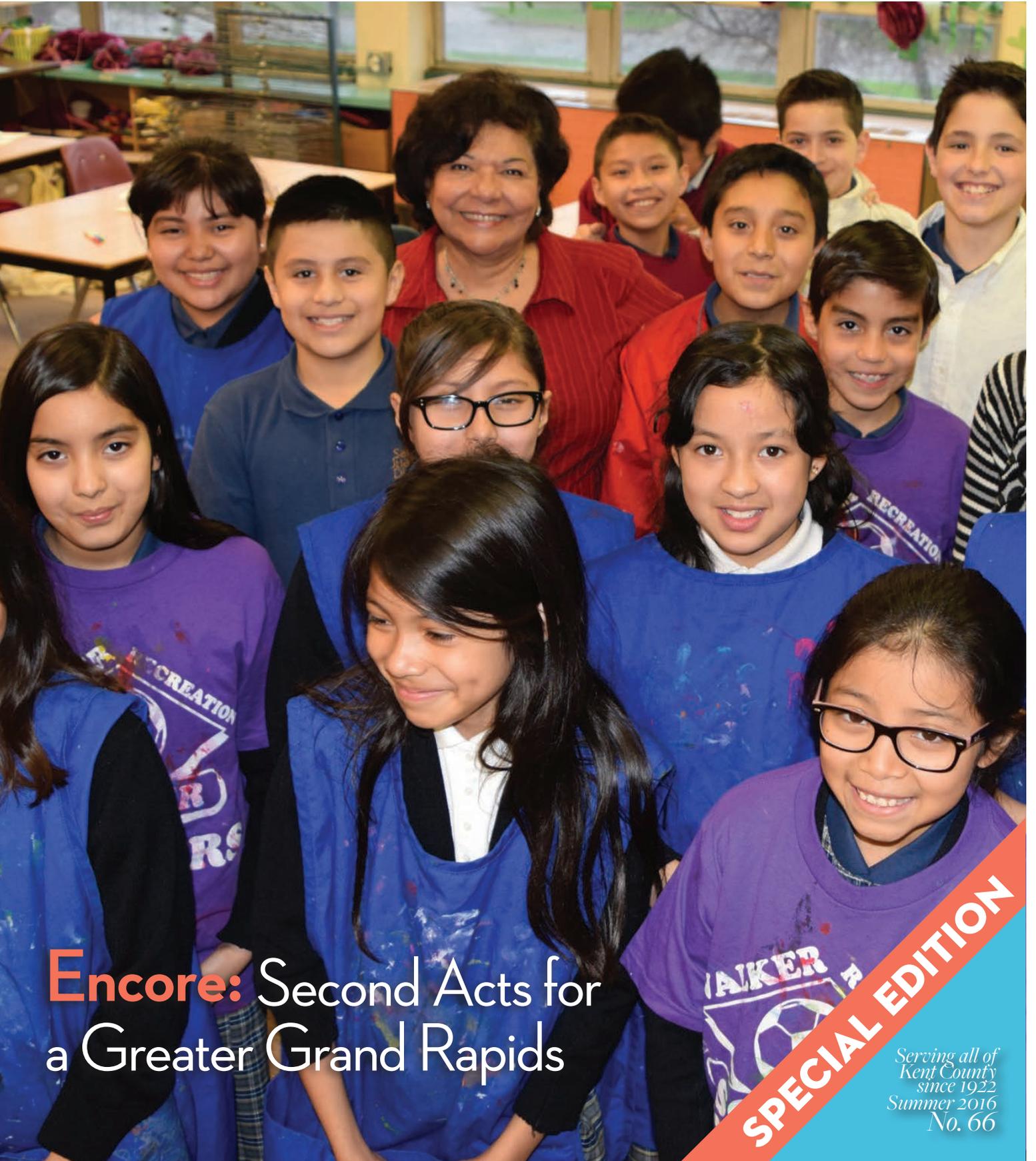


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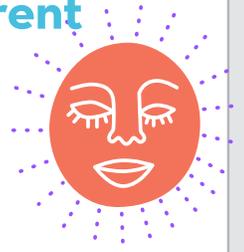


Encore: Second Acts for a Greater Grand Rapids

SPECIAL EDITION

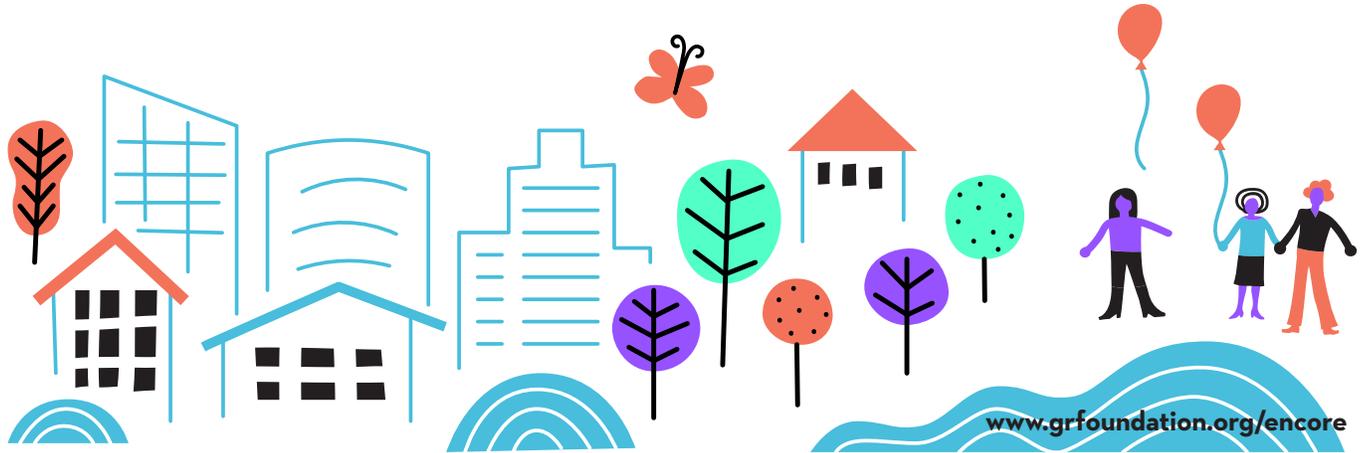
*Serving all of
Kent County
since 1922
Summer 2016
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Welcome to our ENCORE Special Edition of Current



For almost ten years now, Grand Rapids Community Foundation has been exploring and implementing programming in the encore realm. So who is our encore audience, who are we trying to reach? That's a good question. We like to look at encore work with a broad focus, rather than narrow. As our copyeditor Joan Huyser-Honig said after reading our stories, "The tent is big." Indeed. We see encore as an evolving movement—older people, younger people, people in the middle, retirees and those who never want to stop working, entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, seekers, business people and do-gooders.

Encore is, quite simply a movement to direct your time and energy toward creating a greater Grand Rapids.



LIVE YOUR LEGACY NOW!

Well known for helping members of our community establish an estate plan that will ensure a lasting family legacy of generosity, Grand Rapids Community Foundation also firmly believes in the power of sharing abilities and connections. Many community members are entering their later years with a broad range of skills, talents and experience—and expect to remain engaged in our community. So the potential for high-impact service has never been greater.

Our nation's demographic revolution began on January 1, 2006, when the first of 78 million baby boomers reached age 60. Each day since, 10,000 people have turned 60, a trend that will continue till 2024. In Kent County, one in 10 people was at least 60 years old in 2006—now nearly one in five is that old. Inspired by this demographic potential, we asked ourselves: what might happen if thousands of people in midlife and beyond decided to use their talents, experience, education and wisdom for the common good in Grand Rapids?

Encore works to unleash that potential and re-imagine a community where people in their midlife and beyond redefine what aging means in our community. Encore helps craft a new narrative about individual renewal and social impact. We seek to create a broad shift in perceptions about how experienced adults can help create social change.

"We can do more than just leave a legacy. We can live one."

—Marc Freedman,
founder and CEO, *Encore.org*

Encore is *inspiring innovation* in creating opportunities for significant service. It is *building capacity* among social change and service organizations to effectively engage experienced adults. Encore is *raising awareness* of the unprecedented resource for community change that experienced adults offer.

We hope you are inspired by the early pioneers living their encore in our community. Read about Dave Kagan, who uses his encore time to create photographic images of people in Hospice of Michigan, and Linda Otterbridge, who is taking networking to a new level for women in our community. Throughout this Current, you'll find stories about people doing interesting things in the second half of life.

Encore in Kent County was ignited by the generosity and forward thinking of Lucy Barnett, who established a generous Field of Interest Fund at the Community Foundation in 1968. She was interested in addressing the ever-evolving interests of the aging community. We hope to carry on her legacy by empowering thousands more people to live your legacy.

—Kate Luckert Schmid



Lifelong Love of Teaching

At age seven or eight, laboring sunup 'til sundown in the blueberry fields alongside her parents and nine siblings as a migrant worker, Rosa Fraga dreamed of being a teacher. A half-century later, she's teaching still, using her encore years largely to help fulfill the hopes and dreams of people from a rich tapestry of ethnicities. She leans on a personal relationship with Jesus to raise others up.

"Even when I was little, wherever we were, I played teacher," Rosa says. Her first job after graduating from Grand Valley State University was to teach adults, including Spanish-speaking men and women working in Muskegon County.

She moved into administrative roles within Grand Rapids Public Schools and became principal at Adelante High School, an alternative secondary school option. This also allowed her to work with people living in the Grandville Avenue corridor. Her mission was to provide classes in English and workforce skills so students could find meaningful work and thrive.

Rosa, who is married to Vietnamese refugee Dung Nguyen, became an expert on emerging cultures. She discovered the importance of communicating with families in non-traditional



"I think that I'm only now beginning to reinvent myself!"

—Rosa Fraga

ways—through churches, school groups, neighborhood associations; going door to door; and by word of mouth. "We worked and partnered with Grandville Corridor groups and the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association; found counseling for our people; became involved in programs that honored and reached out to senior citizens, elders and Hispanic populations," she says.

She tried to retire in 2005. It didn't take. Instead, she felt called to serve as principal at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Elementary, serving mainly Latinos. The school has since evolved into San Juan Diego Academy, from which Rosa retired in 2013.

But she's hardly slowed. Rosa serves on the academy's hard development committee and on the Grand Rapids Diocesan Catholic School Board.

Given her cultural and institutional knowledge, plus her big heart and expertise, she's often tapped to contribute in various ways.

Her advice to others seeking the right encore fit? "It has a lot to do with will," she says. "Sometimes we forget that we can connect with our will very easily. Engagement with people is at the core of what I do, and, if you're true to your passions, you'll be led there.

"I think that I'm only now beginning to reinvent myself!"

—Tom Rademacher

DREAMERS BY ALL MEANS!

As the Encore Innovation Fellows charged with organizing the encore movement in Grand Rapids, Tera Wozniak Qualls and Jane Royer have big ideas. They envision a system in which everyone—individuals in the second half of life, nonprofits that prepare and use encore talent, government entities that promote civic input and companies that care about snaring talent at any age—participates in a cohesive ecosystem with the same goal in mind.

That goal is to create a greater Kent County by capturing skills and experience from people in midlife and beyond. Did you know that if only five percent of today's population chose encore service, Kent County could gain up to 80,000 person-years of benefit? That's why Grand Rapids Community Foundation is championing the local encore movement.

Our Encore Innovation Fellows are starting with four big ideas.

First, they are modeling changes we want to see emerge in the encore movement, such as intergenerational connections, bridges and innovation. You'll notice the age difference between Tera and Jane. Their intentional pairing shows how different generations can work together and get along seamlessly. Both

believe that something magical happens when all generations participate together.

Jane and Tera agree that the movement's central theme is finding purpose at every stage of life. They do their best to build networks and promote individuals who are intentional about how they support their community. They have adapted quickly to their fellowship work because they prefer networks to hierarchy. And they see themselves not as leaders, but as collaborative hosts engaging with their community to build new practices and pathways for using talent and experience for the greater good.

Second, they are building the local Encore network of individuals. They do this by nurturing interests of those who reach out to Encore and by creating partnerships with programs, such as AARP's Life Reimagined Checkups. These free two-hour checkups help people make changes, find purpose in the second half of life and meet others in the new Encore Individual Network. Tera and Jane will convene this new group regularly so members can keep exploring and get matched with a local nonprofit, government unit or business.

Third, they seek innovative connections with organizations. Last fall, they had



conversations with nearly two dozen nonprofits to explore their vision for the future, their needs and the barriers they see to using encore talent. Tera and Jane will work side-by-side with nonprofits, coaching them to identify and fill talent gaps through using encore individuals in paid and unpaid positions.

Finally, the encore movement around the country is igniting innovative strategies for government and businesses to use encore talent more flexibly, such as through internships and fellowships. This is another exciting element on the horizon, and we hope to share more about it soon on our grfoundation/encore website.

Will you join this movement? As people and multiple sectors cooperate, build and continuously adapt an encore ecosystem, our community will improve in new, unexpected and transformative ways.

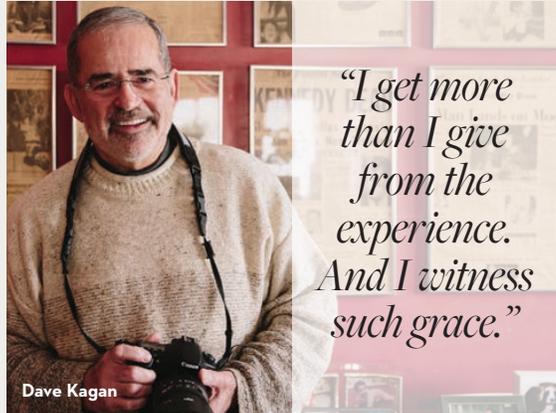
Photographing in Life's Most Tender Moments

Dave Kagan spent a lifetime counseling businesses through the intricacies of marketing, public relations and communications. These days, he simply makes pictures. But perhaps those images have just as much or even more impact. His photographic subjects are special because they belong to a club no one really ever wants to join—Hospice of Michigan.

For the last four years, Dave has used his skills with a camera to capture the essence of families in crisis and transition. Mostly he photographs families with youngsters who are either terminally ill or facing special medical circumstances.

“I wanted to use my skills as a photographer,” he says of looking for a way to spend his encore years. “After my wife’s mom used hospice herself, I was touched by loss and looked into creating family portraits as a keepsake.”

Hospice of Michigan makes Dave’s services known to its families, and then the parties meet, usually somewhere in Kent or a



“I get more than I give from the experience. And I witness such grace.”

surrounding county, for a photo session. To date, Dave has made pictures of dozens of families. He’s also become involved with children who attend Camp Good Grief, a one-day-a-year initiative at Camp Newaygo where grieving children can gather and lean on one another for support.

Dave can’t help but immerse himself personally in his photographic effort, and he has a tough time holding back the tears as he shows a visitor some of the portraits he’s made. A family with a baby born with a rare syndrome. Another who lost a child to cancer. Photos that look

arguably typical, until you spot the wheelchair... the headband... a gang of tubes that no clothing can hide.

“When I retired from the formal workplace, my role with photography and Hospice of Michigan suddenly became part of my encore. And I hope to have many more,” he says.

“I get more than I give from the experience. And I witness such grace.”

—Tom Rademacher

A New Level of Networking

Not two minutes into sitting down with Linda Otterbridge and you come to know this: she’s in your corner.

She is president and owner of an organization she founded called Hook A Sista Up (HASU). It’s aptly named and dedicated to connecting women with people and empowerment strategies to help them soar in their business and personal lives.

HASU’s genesis, said Linda, was born of simply observing “how women support and help each other.”

She actually started HASU while living in North Carolina, but after moving to Grand Rapids, realized it was a need no matter where women lived, worked and congregated.

“Everywhere I went, I would meet women who were interested in moving and connecting,” she says. “They would say, ‘Do you have a hook-up for me?’ and the name just grew from that.”

After three short years, Linda now counts some 60 active members in her organization. Individuals pay a \$75 annual fee and businesses more. This lets them tap into a storehouse of knowledge and wisdom in blogs, workshops, seminars, speaker series, expos, mentorship opportunities, custom-crafted collaborations and more.

Her website, www.hasu1.net, offers a powerful potpourri of possibilities, mostly links to women searching for ways to engage their entrepreneurial spirit and others willing to share their own pitfalls and successes.

Linda’s full-time job is as the site manager for a Cherry Health Center in Grand Rapids. But HASU represents the transition she hopes to make as she reinvents herself for an emerging encore life.

Though Hook A Sista Up has a decidedly African American ring, Linda emphasizes that her organization is a zesty mix of all



ethnicities and backgrounds. It includes women who live as far away as Missouri and North Carolina.

Members are held accountable with monthly check-ins and are encouraged to attend monthly meetings, the location of which rotates. Members are invited to blog at will, and a recent post by Holly Amarandei—a certified life and holistic health coach and nutritional therapist—reflects the sort of warm and folksy flavor that permeates HASU’s website. A HASU member since last year, Holly specializes in “helping women and their families transform their relationship with food and with themselves so they can overcome their obstacles to happiness.”

In a refreshingly honest tone, Holly admits that, despite her formal training, she was “too neurotic to be a full-time mental health professional.” She says she decided to “combine my education with my passion for food and healthy living to create one kick-ass health coach!”

Linda points to mentors like Holly as the sort of women that other women can identify with and feel comfortable approaching for guidance. “HASU is a network of women who want to help you and your business succeed.

“By joining, you’ll be connected to opportunities that will help take your dreams to the next level. Our mission is to help women launch their business ventures and sustain those businesses as successes,” Linda says.

Underscoring the need to collaborate rather than compete, she adds, “When one of us succeeds, we all succeed.”

—Tom Rademacher

BOOMERS WITH A MISSION

We're not exactly a quiet generation—far from it. We're called “boomers” and for good reason. We exploded into this world during the halcyon, post-World War II years from 1946 to 1964. It was a time of unparalleled prosperity—when veterans went to college on the government's dime, jobs were plentiful and elementary schools sprouted like mushrooms across the country.

We continued causing a ruckus as we grew up. We flexed our muscles on college campuses, took advantage of a pill that prevented pregnancy, stormed into the workforce with energy, determination and considerable success. Even in our more traditional turn as parents, we put our own stamp on rearing children in a “helicopter” mode of hovering and anticipating every need.

Now what? We're still here—millions of us—healthier, better educated and more financially secure than any generation before us, with many years looming ahead. But it's a conundrum. What do we do with all these extra years? We have bodies that have seen a few decades, with some wear and tear here and there, but with energy and our wits about us.

There's no doubt we're charting new territory. Demographers tell us that the two most dangerous years in a person's life are the year one is born and the year one retires. Tells you something, doesn't it? Retirement is dangerous and many of us won't even use the word.

We don't want to retire, we want a new gig.

When facing a key juncture in his life, my brother Mike would often say, “I need a mission,” and I think that's what we boomers need—a mission. Through a critical lens, some might characterize our collective boomer lives as years of self-absorption. Perhaps.

We're not the “greatest generation,” not by a long shot. That generation was forged through a crucible of hardship. They lived and sacrificed through the Great Depression and fought a war that preserved our country and democracy. But maybe we could be, if not the greatest generation, then a great one.

However, we need a mission. We also need to redefine this particular stage in our lives. Conventional definitions fall short. The government and assorted agencies call us “seniors” or “older adults.”

“We don't want to retire, we want a new gig.”

If you want an icy stare, try using either term in my group of friends, whose ages range from early 50s to mid-80s.

No, not seniors or just older adults, we are in our second act; **we are resurgents**; we are a redefined generational cohort—no longer just boomers, but boomers with a mission. We are re-energized and focused on doing something great, something focused on others, to benefit others.

And why not? Marc Freedman, the creator of the national Encore movement, calls this period “a new era of longer lives.” He bemoans that “experience isn't always viewed as an asset in today's society,” but concludes that “the nation needs us.” It's a clarion call, don't you think?

Encore is based on the recognition that those in their 50s and beyond want to redefine this stage of their lives from “retirement” to something far different. To quote Marc, “These men and women are moving beyond midlife careers—searching for a calling in the second half of life, crafting a new phase of work that offers not only continued income but the promise of more meaning.”

Here in Kent County, Grand Rapids Community Foundation's Encore seeks to inspire individuals and organizations to use their passion and experience to build a better, stronger community.

Come on, boomers, let's do this.

—Mary McLoughlin



MEET OUR INNOVATION FELLOWS



JANE ROYER

Background: Worked for the Heart of West Michigan's United Way's Volunteer Center for 18 years. Prior to that worked for KanWork (welfare reform) in Kansas.



Encore role: Community organizer and blogger.

Why Encore: “I believe that everyone in our community will benefit when we create open pathways for individuals in the second half of life to contribute their skills and experience in meaningful ways.”

How to find me: jroyer@grfoundation.org.

Encore role: Community organizer and blogger.

Why Encore: “Throughout my career, equity has been at the forefront of all that I do. Encore gives me the opportunity to express my interest in equity work by supporting the development of stronger volunteer and work structures for adults of age 50+. In my work I get to help individuals discover their purpose and help nonprofits uncover the value of all individuals in this age group. Bringing the right person to the right organization can make all the difference for the work they do in the community.”

How to find me: tqualls@grfoundation.org,
Twitter: [@terawozqualls](https://twitter.com/terawozqualls) and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/terawozniakqualls>.

demographic for Encore and also passionate about Encore's mission – to tap the skills and experience of those in midlife and beyond to improve communities.”

How to find me: mmcloughlin@grfoundation.org,
Facebook: Encore by Grand Rapids Community Foundation, Twitter: [EncoreinGR](https://twitter.com/EncoreinGR)

TOM RADEMACHER

Background: Grand Rapids Press reporter and columnist for 37 years, now a freelance writer and storyteller. Author of four books, including column collections *Knocking at your Door* and *Splitting Wood*.



Encore role: Storyteller and blogger.

Why Encore: Because this is a powerful movement with storytelling at its core, revealing how we're all connected!

How to find me: rademachertom@gmail.com and 616.460.2115 (mobile).

TERA WOZNIAK QUALLS

Background: Worked at GVSU's Johnson Center for Philanthropy and wrote a book, *The Talent Development Platform: Putting People First in Social Change Organizations*. Founded Grand Rapids chapter of Young Nonprofit Professional Network, YNPN.GR.



MARY T. MCLOUGHLIN

Background: Independent public relations professional for more than two decades.

Encore role: Public relations, social media, blogging and website work.

Why Encore: “It's a perfect fit! I'm the targeted



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WHAT'S YOUR ENCORE?

A bit stumped on how to start your own encore? Here are some tips.

TIP #1: SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW

You have a lifetime of experiences—from your work, family, friends and community. What lessons have you learned and how might you share them? Take stock and consider the value they could bring to others.

- List the skills you have through your professional and personal life.
- Which of these do you want to focus on?
- Would you be willing to share your skills in a way that truly benefits others and the community?



TIP #2: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO OVER?

You probably have some regrets in life—we all do. Rather than dwell on regrets, consider lessons you've learned and will take into account as you ponder your encore.

- What career path might you have taken if you had followed your heart?
- Do you have important relationships to rekindle or mend?
- Have you spent too much time in one aspect of life and not enough in another?
- What can you still claim that you thought was forever lost?



TIP #3: AVOID OLD PATTERNS, EMBRACE NEW CHOICES

Can you really change in your “second act”? The authors of *Life Reimagined: Discovering Your New Life Possibilities* lay out six “to do’s” to assist you.

- *Reflect.* Take some time to ponder your second act.
- *Connect.* Ask friends and family for insights and advice.
- *Explore.* Test some of your ideas and be curious.
- *Choose.* Narrow your choices and dig deeper.
- *Repack.* Decide what you need to move forward and what to leave behind.
- *Act.* Take that next step.



Learning about these and putting them to work truly can release you from old patterns and allow you to enjoy success in your new choices. If you're interested in learning more, consider enrolling in a free AARP Life Reimagined Checkup, offered in partnership with Grand Rapids Community Foundation's Encore. Check the Events tab on our website, www.grfoundation.org/encore, to find upcoming sessions.

Besides visiting our website for Encore stories, blogs and events, be sure to check us out on Facebook and Twitter.

—Mary McLoughlin