

Johnson Center for Philanthropy names new W.K. Kellogg chair

By GVSU University Communications

Grand Valley State University President Thomas J. Haas announced the appointment of Jason Franklin as the first W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair at the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy. Franklin will assume the nation's first endowed chair focused on community philanthropy June 1.

As the Kellogg chair, Franklin will help philanthropic leaders explore how to best mobilize donors to give together in a community and to specific communities amid the shifting economic, social, political and philanthropic patterns that are reshaping philanthropy. He will partner with community and public foundations, giving circles, donor networks, crowdfunding platforms and others who are building and adapting vehicles for collective giving to move the field of community philanthropy forward. Franklin will also work with community leaders – both communities of place (cities, states, countries) and communities of identity (race, gender, sexuality, age, etc.) – to deepen and strengthen the connections and relationships that inspire donors to give to communities they care about. In the

coming years, Franklin will establish a comprehensive program of applied research, teaching, professional development, public service and thought leadership, all designed to explore and advance the field of community philanthropy, nationally and internationally.

“The field of philanthropy is rapidly evolving with new priorities, players and giving vehicles changing the giving landscape more rapidly than any time in the past century,” Franklin said. “I’m excited to be joining the Johnson Center as the first W.K. Kellogg chair to explore the opportunities and challenges facing our field today. Ultimately, my aim is to inspire and encourage the most effective and powerful giving possible to the causes and communities donors care about.”

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The Johnson Center is proud to establish this new endowed chair as another step forward in its efforts to put philanthropic research to work in the field, supporting effective philanthropy, strong nonprofits and informed community change. Building on the outstanding success of the Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy established in 2010, this new faculty chair honors the legacy of philanthropy and civic investment of W.K. Kellogg, founder of the Kellogg Company and W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek. The chair was established with a \$1.5 million gift from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Kellogg Company 25-Year Employees' Fund.

“The Johnson Center helps nonprofits, foundations and donors seeking to transform their communities for the public good,” said Beverly Grant, the Johnson Center's interim executive director. “We're excited to have Dr. Franklin join us as a national leader helping the Johnson Center pursue this mission.”

Prior to his appointment as the Kellogg chair, Franklin served as executive director of Bolder Giving, which he led through five years of

major growth after Melinda Gates credited them as an inspiration for the billionaire Giving Pledge. During his tenure, he helped Bolder Giving refine its focus on promoting philanthropy for social, racial, economic and environmental justice and dramatically expanded its reach including launching its first programming outside the U.S. He delivered more than 150 workshops and speeches about philanthropy, generosity and social change and oversaw the launch of new efforts to inspire and support donors to give including GivingCommunities.org (a new online portal connecting individual donors to peer networks around the globe) and Give OUT Day (national day of giving for the LGBTQ community).

Franklin received his doctorate in public administration from New York University's Wagner School of Public Service, where he also served for almost a decade as an award-winning adjunct professor. Franklin has held previous positions at the 21st Century School Fund, the Rockefeller Foundation's Next Generation Leadership Network housed at NYU's Research Center for Leadership in Action, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, White House Office of National AIDS Policy and the Oregon Commission on Children and Families.