



**R.H. MALLORY CENTER
FOR COMMUNITY
GEOGRAPHY**

Geography and Environmental Studies

Public Talk

Speaker

Dr. Michael DeVivo

Grand Rapids Community College

Director of Geography

Recipient of Presidential Achievement

Award of AAG



Title

**Practicing the Art of Transformational
Leadership in Academic Geography Today**

Abstract

Criticism of higher education as a public good has escalated, and geography remains in a precarious position. It continues to be largely a “discovery discipline” in American colleges and universities; few incoming freshmen declare geography as a major. Those who become acquainted with the field tend to gain familiarity by selecting a geography course from a plethora of general education options. Sole reliance upon this kind of happenstance does a disservice to humanity, for geographers can do much to solve “real world” problems. Clearly, the onus is upon academic geographers, to practice the art of transformational leadership, for embracing this leadership behavior is imperative for geography to prosper in the 21st century. Scholarship in leadership, explorations in the history of geographic thought, and fieldwork in Sub Saharan Africa, as well as mentoring, teaching, and community engagement experiences, have provided considerable insight concerning pragmatic strategies for enhancing the geographical community and elevating the image of geography.

Date: Friday April, 10, 2026 @ 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Location: Bandelier East 105