

Commencement  
Presidential Address  
May 5, 2006  
3:30 p.m.  
David L. Eisler, President

## College of Allied Health

### Graduation Recognition

It is a true honor to stand before you – the class of 2006. Today is a wonderful opportunity for you to reflect on your accomplishments here at Ferris State University. At such you need to know that your success is built upon the collective efforts of so many people who care about you and who take great pride in your growth and development.

I want to pause for a moment so we can express our thanks to them. I begin with our faculty, who have served as your teachers, advisors, guides, and mentors. We are truly fortunate to have a faculty who are dedicated to teaching and who care deeply about students. I would ask that are our faculty rise so we can express our thanks to them.

Next I want to recognize our staff, who each contribute in their way for you our students. In doing so I would note the beautiful decorations here today and their many contributions to today's ceremony.

We are fortunate today to have a beautiful commencement program which provides information on our University, its program, and today's ceremony. I extend special thanks to the students in our University Printing program for this wonderful keepsake.

Now to the special guests with us today. First I want to recognize your parents who are here with you. They have planned and sacrificed to help you reach this pinnacle of achievement. Parents please stand.

I would be willing to guess that there are also proud grandparents here today. Would you please stand.

For some graduates there are spouses or significant others who have stood by them in both good and tough times and have supported you working toward this day. Would you please stand.

Graduates, some of you also have children, who have had to share their Mom or Dad with books, studying, and homework assignments. I'd ask the children of our graduates to stand.

Finally we have many friends and other relatives of our graduates here today. Please stand so we can thank you for being here with us today.

Graduates in a few moments you'll be crossing this stage. A few helpful reminders - As you celebrate this achievement take time to thank those who have worked, helped, and supported you. Their sacrifice and love have helped create this moment for you.

Second, a practical, but useful reminder. We're going to take your picture as you receive your degree, don't forget to pause as I shake your hand and smile.

### Student Story

For every student who crosses our stage today there is a story, a story that includes parents, family and friends that supported them, teachers on all levels that have educated, challenged, and prepared them and personal commitment, effort, and sacrifice that has helped transform them. In the success, triumphs, and achievements of these graduates we see our hopes and dreams for the future, a future that is bright and promising and filled with opportunities that may yet be undiscovered.

Over the past few weeks I have taken time to visit with our graduates, learning about their experiences and hearing their stories. As I have listened, I have developed an even deeper appreciation of the students we have at Ferris State University and the power of the educational experience we provide here. These are more than outstanding students crossing our stage today. These are extraordinary people, individuals that I would be proud to have as son or daughter, brother or sister, father or mother. I want you to know how impressed I am with these graduates. Perhaps the easiest way to illustrate this is to share one of their stories.

Having already earned a bachelor degree in Chemistry and Environmental Science this student found that his position in the automotive industry lacked meaning. Seeing the medical industry booming and with a strong desire to help people he entered the Nuclear Medicine program here at Ferris State University. Married and with two daughters, ages two and four, this was a challenge that required considerable time management skills. As he describes it "you have to be able to juggle a lot of balls in the air." And no wonder, in addition to his studies at Ferris, he worked a full-time job for a cell phone company. From 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. he repairs cell phone towers throughout the state of Michigan, traveling as many as

65,000 miles a year. Since August he has worked both this all night shift and his 40 hour per week internship. He credits the support of faculty here for his efforts, especially Shelia Squicciarini.

In speaking with him I expected to hear about how hard he had worked during this period and how difficult this experience had been. Instead he talked about how much he had enjoyed his degree and how much people had helped him. He begins his new position at Beaumont Hospital in Troy on May 15<sup>th</sup>. For me Joel Fallon exemplifies the determination of our students to earn their degree and their willingness to work incredibly hard to reach this achievement. Please join me in recognizing Joel. I would ask that his family rise so we can recognize them also.

On behalf of our University I wish you great success, meaning and fulfillment. As each of you sets out on the next step of your life and career you will face times of challenge, heartbreak, and disappointment. In those times when you might consider giving up, I'd encourage you to remember this wonderful example of Joel Fallon. Like each of you, his story represents the hard work, sacrifice, and determination required to not just succeed, but to excel.