

With his original class of fifteen students at the Big Rapids Industrial School, Woodbridge Ferris set the expectation that Ferris State University would foster the aspirations of education for all people. Now, with the selection of Dr. David Pilgrim as the first Chief Diversity Officer at our University, and with the strong proactive work of the Diversity Planning Committee, is the right time to restate firmly and conclusively Ferris State University's strong support for diversity.

As an institution of higher learning Ferris State University strongly embraces these concepts and what they represent. Today we prepare students for a world that is global, connected and diverse. In this rapidly evolving environment, it is more important than ever that our students both respect and understand other cultures, be able to celebrate differences, and be able to learn in an atmosphere that fosters collaboration, cooperation, and understanding.

For this to occur, our University must continue to encourage and celebrate diversity. It is not enough that we promote understanding, acceptance and respect for differences, we must go beyond these ideals to create a University that is a safe, nurturing environment – a University that actively welcomes, encourages, and engages all people, all cultures, and all communities in our work.

Together we seek to create a University that infuses diversity into its core, a community that chooses to work together with all people for the common good, and a place where the excellence of our education is enhanced by the diverse community where it occurs. In doing so, we set the example for students of our expectations for them. Simply put, “We must become the change we seek to see in the world.”

I encourage you to join with the efforts of the Diversity Planning Committee, with colleagues both on and off campus, with our Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. David Pilgrim, and with me to help foster and further diversity efforts on campus. Indeed the development and implementation of a strong university-wide Diversity Plan is integral to the excellence we seek for both the present and future. Together we will create a great University that is an example to others of what is possible, both today and in the future.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President