

# Seat at the Table

December 1, 2016

- ✓ Diwali is one of the biggest festivals of Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm and happiness in Fiji, Guyana, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The festival is celebrated for five continuous days up to five days; the third day is celebrated as the Festival of Lights. On October 28, 2016, Ferris hosted a Diwali Festival. There was dancing, eating, and much merriment. To view photographs see  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/FerrisStateDiversityandInclusionOffice/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=1185962678124069](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FerrisStateDiversityandInclusionOffice/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1185962678124069).
- ✓ About 100 Ferris students, faculty, staff, and administrators attended an event, *On Conversations on Race*, on October 26. This discussion about Black Lives Matter and peaceful protest was led by two moderators: Durshana Kirby, Black Student Union, and Lindsey Hogan, Communications Program, and four panelists: Kayla Jordan, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Perla Veloz, Hispanic Student Organization; Tyrikh Hunter, Black Leaders Aspiring for Critical Knowledge; and, Ajia Phillips, You Beautiful Black Woman. The event was sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Student Services (OMSS).
- ✓ November was Native American Heritage Month. OMSS and the Circle of Tribal Nations collaborated on several events, including a Ghost Supper—a harvest feast officiated by local Native Americans to honor those who have died—and a Native American Thanksgiving feast and presentation.
- ✓ A big shout out to the Provost Office, Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services, the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, and Retention and Student Success for bringing the “Allies for Inclusion” traveling interactive exhibit to the University. The exhibit detailed the history of the disability rights movement. It was available November 7-9. The Diversity and Inclusion Office was pleased to be a co-sponsor of this powerful teaching tool.

- ✓ For the past year the Diversity and Inclusion Office has been working to address food insecurity among Ferris students. Our latest initiative is the creation of a Facebook group, *Ferris: There's Food Here!* This page allows students, staff and faculty to post pictures and information identifying when free food is available on the Big Rapids campus. Please encourage all Ferris community members to join the Facebook group. This initiative is really having a positive impact. Click here to view the site:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1193169730738761/members/>.
- ✓ Arrick Jackson, Dean, College of Education and Human Services, Usman Adamu, Director, School of Education, Matthew Adeyanju, Dean, College of Health Professions, Lincoln Gibbs, Associate Dean, College of Health Professions, and Franklin Hughes, Multi-media specialist, Diversity and Inclusion Office, shared their views on success with students who participated in OMSS' Black Male Network Program.
- ✓ The Ferris Youth Initiative (FYI), a program created by the Diversity and Inclusion Office, is designed for students who have been in or aged out of foster care. On November 5, FYI mentors and mentees had a retreat at Cran-Hill Ranch. This is one of many initiatives organized by Janette Ward, the Coordinator of Independent Living-Life Coach for FYI.
- ✓ The Faculty/Staff Mini-grant program has been the vehicle through which many diversity and inclusion initiatives have been funded. The funds are awarded after a thorough review by a committee. The committee, under the direction of Fran Rosen, Acquisitions and Collection Development Librarian, recently awarded two grants. A team led by Anil Venkatesh, assistant professor of mathematics, received a grant to bring David Kung, an expert on exclusion and discrimination in STEM fields, to facilitate discussions on campus. The committee also approved a grant to a team led by Sandra Alspach, professor of communication. That grant application requested financial support to send six Sports Communication students to the International Association for Communication and Sport Summit in Phoenix in Spring 2017. The students have collaborated on a research project and hope to present their findings at the Summit.
- ✓ The Diversity and Inclusion Office sponsored a trip by Rita Walters, assistant professor of social work, to Haiti to explore Study Abroad opportunities for Ferris students.

- ✓ Tracy Busch, associate professor of history, is the lead faculty for the Ferris Museum of Sexist Objects. Recently, she traveled to Russia to deliver a lecture at the Kazan Kremlin Museum Conference.
- ✓ The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration is one of the signature events at the University. The celebration has multiple activities including a Freedom March and Student Tribute (4-6 PM, January 16, University Center Lounge, 202), a discussion (5-6:30 PM, January 17, University Center, 202B), and a lecture delivered by Bakari Sellers, a CNN political analyst (January 18, 7-8 PM, University Center, 202). To learn about the events visit [www.ferris.edu/mlk](http://www.ferris.edu/mlk).
- ✓ Please join us on January 16, 2017, from 10 AM – 12PM, for the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Faculty/Staff In-Service to honor Martin Luther King Jr. This year's theme is "Civility or Incivility." This is an opportunity for the University community to hear faculty and staff read poems, essays, and short stories about the struggle between civility and incivility. Preference will be given to original writings, although the program will include some well-known writings. If you are interested in being a reader, please contact David Pilgrim (pilgrimd@ferris.edu or x3946). We will accommodate as many readers as possible. Those interested in attending the lunch should R.S.V.P by January 11. Please call x3946.

## Did You Know?

Nathan Harris, a multi-racial black identified man, played for many of the best teams in all-black baseball leagues between 1900 and 1910. In 1901 he had a short stint with the Chicago Columbia Giants. The next season the Giants moved to Big Rapids, Michigan. Harris stayed in Big Rapids that winter and (get this!) played on and coached the College Preparatory football team at Ferris State University. He is likely the first African American student at Ferris—and, one of the first (if not the first) African Americans to coach football at a historically white university. Now you know.