

**Faculty Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application.** Electronic submission is required. A signature page signed by each team member is required; please include a scanned/digitized copy with your submission or send the signature page separately to the Diversity and Inclusion Office.

<b>Project Title:</b> Disability Awareness Month 2019
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**List the members of the team and indicate their roles on the project. One member should be identified as Team Leader.**

1. Maggie Walcott      Role on team: **Team Leader**, Lead on Flirting with Disability/  
Skeleton Skurry
2. Amy Greene      Role on team: Committee Member, Lead on E-sports Unity  
Bowl/Skeleton Skurry
3. Kimberly Dickman      Role on team: Committee Member, Lead on Companions in the Quad/  
Deej Movie Screening
4. Ashley Hawley      Role on team: Committee Member, Lead on Companions in the Quad
5. Christopher Richmond      Role on team: Committee Member, Moderator for Flirting with  
Disability

**Contact Information for Team Leader:**

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**Project Summary/Abstract:**

A schedule of five events will be offered on the Ferris State University campus this October for Disability Awareness Month, with the goal of fostering discussion around and mindfulness of our community of students, staff and faculty with disabilities. With nearly 1 in 5 people identifying as having a disability, it is more important than ever to break the stereotypes and overcome preconceptions regarding what disability looks like. This year's events are designed specifically to challenge perceptions while simultaneously creating safe spaces for persons with disabilities to engage in "real talk" and community building. All events, with the exception of the 5K race, are free of charge for participants and the public is strongly encouraged (through team member networking efforts) to attend.

## Project Narrative.

Nearly one in five individuals identifies as having a disability, whether that disability is physical, intellectual, neurological, psychiatric, visual, auditory or otherwise. With numbers like that, you might assume that societal mindfulness for persons with disabilities would be a given, but it is very much the opposite. A university should be a microcosm of the society that we wish to live in, but at Ferris State University that vision frequently fails to include persons with disabilities. From the inaccessibility of our buildings to the wording of our “special” non-discrimination disclosure, it is difficult for persons with disabilities (PWD) to feel welcome on our campus. Likewise, finding funding for *or interest in* events which celebrate our community of students, staff and faculty with disabilities is similarly difficult.

Each year the Liaison Committee for Students with Disabilities aims to remedy this lack of mindfulness and encourages inclusion of PWD by planning events which are designed to be interesting to attendees while simultaneously raising awareness of the vibrant and thriving community of students, staff and faculty with disabilities here at Ferris State University. Our goal in hosting this annual series of events is two-fold: Chiefly, that eventually and with enough awareness and interest, ***Ferris State University can be recognized as leading institute for students with disabilities***, in much the same way that we have done for Latino students and our international students.

In an era where every enrolled students counts, we are actively ignoring an entire population of individuals who very much want to attend university, but who are not being recruited. Creating programming which makes our current community of PWD feel acknowledged and welcome is certainly part of this, but more importantly, we are laying the groundwork for those who are without disabilities to see those in our community who are with. We cannot be what we cannot see, and currently, Ferris State University has very few staff/faculty who identify as a PWD. As our committee actively works to engage the community in our awareness activities, we anticipate greater participation, mindfulness and ultimately, a more diverse population.

Our secondary goal is to create enough awareness of this important community to procure ongoing funding for the work that the Liaison Committee for Students with Disabilities performs. Currently this committee receives ZERO ongoing funding from any department, relying fully upon the funding that they are able to obtain from individual departments each year. This method is unreliable at best, particular during fiscally difficult times, and not conducive to creating events which are meaningful enough to have a lasting impact on our campus.

## Project Description

This year’s Disability Awareness Month is comprised of five separate events. Each event has been hand selected with the goal of fostering discussion around and mindfulness of our community of students, staff and faculty with disabilities. The expected completion date for this year’s Disability Awareness Month events will be 10/31/19. While the details for specific events are still in the works, the outline is as follows:

- **10/9/19 – Movie Screening of the film, DEEJ.** DEEJ is a documentary about autism and inclusion and provides an insider view of the life of DJ “Deej” Savarese. Abandoned by his birth parents and presumed incompetent, Deej found not only a loving family but also a life in words, which he types on a text-to-voice synthesizer. As he makes his way through high school and dreams of college, he confronts the terrors of his past,

society's obstacles to inclusion, and the sometimes paralyzing beauty of his own senses. In his advocacy on behalf of other nonspeaking autistics, he embraces filmmaking and poetry, and discovers what having a voice can truly mean.

- **Event to include popcorn and refreshments, as well as a facilitated discussion led by team members Kim Dickman and Liaison Committee for Students with Disabilities member Ted Halm.**
  - **Event attendance is expected to be between 25-40 people. Event will be shared via social media and print media on Ferris Campus, with the Creative Writing Department at Ferris and also in the local community and with the Big Rapids High School Diversity Club.**
  - **Event outcomes include the creation of a learning environment that is inclusive of the autism community and PWD at large. Efficacy of this outcome will be measured by post-film discussion and survey through Wufoo.**
- **10/12/19 – eSports Unity Bowl.** This fully inclusive event, led by team member **Amy Greene** of EIO, will bring together Ferris eSports club members as well as local high school students and Area 5 Special Olympics team members as they compete in online games on an electronic playing field designed to be even for ALL participants.
    - **Costs associated with the event will include the rental of the UC Ballrooms on the projected date, as well as light refreshments to be provided for participants who choose to attend the event in person vs. online.**
    - **Event attendance is expected to be between 50-100 people, but reach is further as we work with both local high schools and Area 5 Special Olympians to publicize. Event will also be shared via social and print media on Ferris campus.**
    - **Event outcomes include the creation of a university event which is welcoming to diverse populations, while also advertising ourselves as a collaborative entity that is focused on creating safe event spaces for PWD. Event outcomes to be measured through follow up discussions with eSports participants, teams and SOMA leaders. Optional Wufoo survey will be provided to collaborators after the event.**
- **10/16/19 – Flirting with disAbility.** This panel style event will feature FSU College of Business alumni and social media guru, Melissa DiVietri, who is ready to talk about sexual identity, relationships and all the spaces in between for persons with disability. Although the panel participants are still in flux, we have nailed down both Melissa DiVietri and Sarah Doherty, the latter of whom will be speaking from the perspective of the LGBTQ community of PWD. We are also working with The Center for Sexual Pleasure and Health (CSPH) to see if one of their team members that specializes in sexual education for adults with disabilities can be a part of this event.

Moderation of this panel will be provided by licensed psychologist and DAM team member, Christopher Richmond. Additionally, we hope to provide tabling prior to and after the event to complement the topics discussed, including tables from the Anti-Violence Coalition, AEGIS, the Liaison Committee for Students with Disabilities, and many more. If sufficient funds are received, we would like to provide food leading up to this event to encourage attendance from passersby.

- **Event attendance is expected to be between 75-100 people, with many more passing by the tabling in the reserved IRC Connector before/after the event. Event will be shared via social and print media on campus, and community collaboration**

**will be sought for tabling in the IRC connector beforehand. Additionally, event attendees will be using the hashtag #flirtingfsu to continue the discussion after the event.**

- **Event outcomes will include the creation of a learning environment which is sensitive to our diverse community of PWD, while also creating a safe space in which we welcome discussion of topics that were previously limited to PWD but are now being opened up for the consideration of the public as a whole. Event outcomes to be measured by post-event survey, given at the conclusion of the event, using Wufoo.**
- **10/24/19 – Companions in the Quad.** This event is designed as a community building event for the staff, students and faculty who have an interest in Assistance Animals on campus. Held outdoors, this event is open to everyone on campus and within our community, however, only Assistance Animals previously registered will be allowed to attend the event. registered with Ferris State University as one of the two above qualifiers, and also only to individuals who pre-register their companion for the event. Assistance Animals must be leashed, well socialized and waste must be picked up by owners. Any participants violating those terms will be asked to leave the event.

Although open only to Assistance Animals that are registered, attendees from the public are welcome. Free dog biscuit samples which have been hand made by employees with disabilities will be on hand courtesy of non-profit group, Beer City Dog Biscuits. We will also be purchasing and handing out additional resources for local pet owners as a way to engage passersby. ECDS will be providing informational tabling for individuals who desire additional information regarding Ferris State University's policy on assistance animals. Team member **Kim Dickman** will be on hand to man the ECDS table, and team member **Ashley Hawley** will take the lead in running this event and gathering giveaways.

- **Event participation by students/staff/faculty with animals is expected to be between 10-30 people, however, the reach with those who attend the event will be much greater as the Quad location is very conducive to interaction. The event will be shared via social and print media on campus, and community collaboration will be sought for tabling.**
- **Event outcomes include the creation of a welcoming community for event participants, and the education of our general community of the many diverse faces in our students/staff/faculty with assistance animals. Event outcomes will be measured in follow up discussions with event participants. Names will also be collected from attendees who register for the gift basket, and can be used to calculate a rough number of expected attendance moving forward.**
- **10/26/19 – Skeleton Skurry Inclusive 5K Race.** This event, while in its 7<sup>th</sup> year, is currently in its 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a “fully accessible” race thanks to our collaboration with The Pioneer Group. Very few 5K race events are fully inclusive for individuals with disabilities, but we are proud to have collaborated with Mary Free Bed to ensure that this race is accessible for chair users, and are prepared to provide guides for runners with visual impairments. In addition to being open to everyone from the public – this event adjoins the Big Rapids Fall Fest activities, making it possible for this particular Disability Awareness event to reach a significantly larger community audience. Team members Maggie Walcott and Amy Greene have worked throughout the year to ensure that this collaboration moves forward and will

be on hand the day of the race to volunteer their services. While most costs associated with this event are covered by The Pioneer Group, last year an additional cost of the timing company was incurred and payment was facilitated by the Liaison Committee for Students with Disabilities.

- **Event participation is typically between 120-150 runners, ranging in ages from 7-70+. Event reach is much greater, however, as the race is directly adjacent to the Big Rapids Fall Fest. The Pioneer Group handles all print media, but we have also been sharing via social media, and through connections with the Mary Free Bed Wheelchair Race Team.**
- **Primarily, the product of this event is that those PWD who may otherwise have been precluded from racing, are now being *included* as participants. However, it also serves to showcase Ferris State University as an institute which is not only welcoming to PWD, but fully supportive of that population and committed to ensuring their presence in every place that persons without disabilities are already at. Event outcomes will be measured in event recap discussions with The Pioneer Group, scheduled for 2 weeks post-event.**

## Disability Awareness Month Budget Overview

	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
STIPEND	\$0	\$0	\$0
HONORARIA	\$500 – Melissa DiVietri (10/16/19) \$1,000 – CSPH Team Member (Skype)		\$1,500
TRAVEL	\$375 – Melissa DiVietri (10/16/19)	\$375 – Funded by CAS	\$750 (includes Amtrak tickets from DET to GRR and back, rental car for 4 days, hotel for 4 days)

FOOD	<p>\$100 – movie popcorn/refreshments/candy (10/9/19)</p> <p>\$250 – snacks/refreshments (10/12/10)</p> <p>\$100 – drinks/cookies (10/16/19)</p> <p>\$350 – Jimmy Johns catering (10/16/19)</p>	\$100 (10/16/19) – dinner with panelists post-event (Funded by RSS)	\$900
RENTALS	\$50 – 10/12/19 - UCB room rental		\$50
PRINTING & DUPLICATING	<p>\$300 – FSU Print Center (DAM flyers/posters/pluggers)</p> <p>\$75 – foam core poster (10/16/19 event)</p> <p>\$150 – Banner for LCSD Disability Awareness Table</p>		\$500
PROMOTION	<p>\$100 (10/16/19) stickers for giveaways – custom designed through Café Press with the “sexy wheelchair lady” graphic designed by Melissa DiVietri</p> <p>\$100 – (10/24/19) Pet Care Basket Giveway (FSU leash/bandana/collar/pet toss toy, \$25 gift certificate to local groomer, scooper, groom glove, dog bowl, doggie doo bags)</p>		\$500

	\$300 – (10/24/19) promotional giveaways (100 FSU themed plastic poop pick up bags = \$200, 100 pet printed plastic treat jars = \$100)		
<b>SUPPLIES &amp; POSTAGE</b>		\$0	\$0
<b>RESOURCE MATERIALS</b>		\$25 (tape/markers/ Posterboards) (Funded by RSS)	\$25
<b>ASSESSMENT TOOLS</b>		\$0	\$0
<b>OTHER</b>	\$750 – Timing Professional Services (Base fee of \$250, plus \$2.75 per pre-registered runner and \$3.75 per late registered runner – total cost will depend upon how many runners participate, so this is an estimate based on previous year’s numbers.)		\$750
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$4,500	\$500
			\$5,000