

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
April 25, 2016

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Today begins the last week of classes as we rapidly move toward commencement and the end of the academic year. This is a time when we look back and reflect on our graduating students, their experiences at our university, and their growth as individuals, as we celebrate their successes and achievements.

It is a time when we celebrate your contributions, achievements, and commitment to the university, as we did this last week with our Service Awards ceremony. I want to congratulate all of faculty and staff award honorees, as well as everyone completed five-year increments of service to the university. To the list published earlier I want to add the following KCAD faculty and staff: 5 Years: Nataliya Matveev, Kara Peltier, Kim Sapkowski and Adam Wetherell. 10 Years: Jason Alger and Travis Wollman. 15 Years: Sarah Joseph and Diane Zeeuw. 30 Years: Lori DeForest. 45 Years: Ron Riksen.

As we complete this year, I want to recognize the contributions of our faculty and staff who have retired or will be retiring. This group represents a remarkable commitment to Ferris. Every one of these retirees served the university for at least 10 years, and 22 have been at Ferris for at least 20 years.

Please join me in thanking the following faculty and staff members for their many contributions to Ferris State University: Nancy Alles, Rich Bearden, Tom Behler, Joan Birkam, Doug Blakemore, Dorothy Cline, Julie Coon, Susan Davis, Harry Dempsey, Mary Dilley, Kevin Elliott, Carla Erlewine, Diane Fleming, Will Gasper, Ron Mehringer, Philip Middleton, Ben Mumah, Pamela Panek, Patricia Patterson, Mark Rozier, Marc Sheehan, Kenneth Starner, June Swanson, Deb Thalner, John Urbanick, Jackie Warner, Tom Weaver, Susan Weaver, Chris Weber and Gary Williams. This group represents more than 800 years of committed service to Ferris State University and our students. We will miss each of them and wish them well in their retirement.

I hope you have found this past year professionally satisfying. In talking to graduating seniors during the past few days, I am continually impressed by how frequently they reference the difference our faculty and staff made in choosing Ferris, and then being successful here. On behalf of our graduates, thank you for making Ferris a welcoming and vibrant university.

## Commencement 2016

This year our commencement ceremonies take place May 6 and 7 in Big Rapids and Grand Rapids. The full commencement schedule is:

### Friday, May 6

3:30 p.m., College of Health Professions

7 p.m., College of Arts and Sciences, College of Pharmacy, and Doctorate in Community College Leadership

### Saturday, May 7

9 a.m., College of Business

10:30 a.m., Kendall College of Art and Design (at Fountain Street Church)

12:30 p.m., Michigan College of Optometry, College of Education and Human Services

4 p.m., College of Engineering Technology

In addition to our graduates, we will also award honorary doctorates to three extraordinary alumni.

- Jeffrey F. Harrold is Chairman and CEO of Auto-Owners Insurance Company, a Fortune 500 company based in Lansing. He is also a member of the Leadership Advisory Board for our College of Business.
- Robert "Bob" Hegbloom is President and CEO of the Ram Truck brand. In January of 2015 he was named to MotorTrend's "2015 Power List" as one of 50 leaders shaping the auto industry.
- Vivian Pickard is retiring from General Motors after serving as CEO of the GM Foundation and most recently as Director of Community Partnerships, where she has led efforts for partnerships and investments in education, health and human services, the environment and community development.

Commencement is a very special moment for our graduates, one which they will remember their whole lives. If you know a graduating student, please congratulate them on their achievement. We will have many family members and friends of our graduates on campus. Thank you in advance for making them feel welcome and helping them to carry away the best possible memory of this celebration.

### **Ferris Foundation**

Saturday evening the Ferris Foundation hosted its annual Societies of Distinction celebration at Grand Rapids' Meijer Gardens. This special occasion thanks our donors for the difference they make for our students, our academic programs, and our university. Shelby Alba, a Biology/Pre-Optometry major from East Tawas did a beautiful job representing our student scholarship recipients. Annually we recognize a very special donor with the Foundation's "Pass the Torch" award. This year Professor Robert Friar was surprised with this honor. Bob began teaching at Ferris in 1967. He currently serves as a member of the Foundation Board and has created three scholarship endowments. This was a very special moment. Two excellent videos were produced for the evening - one on stewardship and one of our students expressing their appreciation to donors. They capture wonderfully the difference donor support makes for our university and the appreciation of our students for the scholarships they receive. The videos are worth watching and are accessible [here](#) and [here](#).

During their Board meeting on Saturday the Ferris Foundation approved criteria for the Ferris Futures Scholarship Challenge, which over six years seeks to match the \$18 million received earlier this year. When completed, the resulting \$36 million in new scholarship endowments will generate over \$1.4 million for student scholarships annually. I want to thank the Foundation Board members for taking on this challenge to transform scholarship support for our students.

### **Pancakes with the President**

Our annual "Pancakes with the President" event will be hosted by the Student Government Association on Monday, May 2, starting at 10 p.m. in the Rock Café. Our students look forward to this event as a welcome break from studying for final exams, getting ready to graduate and preparing to head home for the summer – or in some cases heading out to start new careers.

If you have volunteered in the past you know this is a chance to provide students with a unique event, which for the graduates of the Class of 2016 will be one of their last opportunities to visit with their friends at Ferris. It is also high spirited fun, as the Rock is always crowded to capacity. In addition to providing food and good company, students can consult with tutors in The Rock's private dining area. Come join us in serving our students. To volunteer to help, please contact Elaine Kamptner at ext.2504 or [kamptnee@ferris.edu](mailto:kamptnee@ferris.edu). Thank you.

### **Campus Events**

This is Money Smart Week on campus. Events start today with a presentation on "Twelve Money Mistakes You Can't Afford to Make," at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. in UC 203. A highlight of Money Smart Week is always the "Get Real" giant game of life, on Wednesday, April 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in UC 202. A full list of events is available at the university's [Money Smart Week page](#).

BEYOND: Globalization takes place this Thursday, April 28, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in UC 202. This BEYOND event is specifically for Ferris faculty and staff to learn more about resources for personal and professional growth through global engagement. Thirty-five faculty and staff members will share their experience with these resources. The exhibit will also feature 45 different posters that illustrate various aspects of Ferris' global engagement, including experiential learning opportunities with exchange partner universities, international student engagement, and more. Please attend and learn about global efforts at Ferris.

This coming Saturday, April 30, on the North Quad from Noon to 4 p.m., the Office of Multicultural Student Services hosts its annual "Pignic," a free event that brings together students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends for food and music. This will be followed by the annual Black Greek Council Step Show, which begins in Williams Auditorium at 5 p.m.

## **Help an Alumnus**

Alumnus Andrew MacIver is manager of Lakeview Arena in Marquette, which is a finalist in the Kraft Hockeyville USA Competition. The Grand Prize is \$150,000 in rink improvements and the opportunity to host an NHL pre-season game. To support his efforts you can vote today and tomorrow for Lakeview Arena [at this link](#).

## **Athletics**

Our men's golf team will be making their 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive appearance at the NCAA regional tournament when they compete on May 2-4 at The Meadows Golf Course at Grand Valley. The top five teams will advance to the national championship at Green Valley Ranch in Denver, Colo., on May 17-21. Congratulations and best wishes to our men's golf team.

On Saturday our men's tennis team clinched a share of the GLIAC championship with an 8-1 victory over Walsh University, and then earned the outright conference championship with an 8-1 win over Tiffin on Sunday. This is the fifth conference championship earned by Ferris athletic teams this year as men's tennis joins football, volleyball, men's basketball, and ice hockey as conference champions. What a truly memorable year it has been for our athletic programs! The GLIAC Men's Tennis Tournament takes place this Friday-Sunday, April 29-May 1, in Midland. Congratulations and best wishes go to coach Chad Berryhill and our men's tennis athletes.

David L. Eisler, president