

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
December 12, 2016

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## Commencement

This Saturday the culmination of much dedication, commitment and perseverance by our students will be recognized. Over 700 graduates will cross the stage inside Ewigleben Sports Complex and receive the degree they have worked so very hard to earn. Commencement ceremonies for College of Business and College of Health Professions graduates begin at 10 a.m., with ceremonies for College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Human Services, and College of Engineering Technology graduates at 1:30 p.m.

In the weeks leading up to commencement I have been visiting with our students and hearing their stories about their education at Ferris. It is humbling and inspiring to hear what they have overcome to earn their degree and to learn how faculty and staff have played such a critical role in shaping their success.

Everyone is welcome to attend commencement. If you have never done so before, I highly encourage you to see firsthand how the work you do each and every day truly makes a difference in our students' lives. Thank you for helping to make this day special for our graduates. If you would like a ticket to attend either ceremony, please call our office at ext. 2500.

## Good News

There is much extraordinary work underway at our University. With the end of the semester there are many examples of scholarship, service and achievement by our faculty, staff and students that deserve recognition.

- Ana Davila-Howard, Daniel Noren and Eric Warner presented at the Michigan World Languages Association Annual Conference. Kristin Oplinger was the 2016 MWLA Conference coordinator.
- Deirdre Fagan published a short story, "Trespassing," in *Connotation Press*.
- Roxanne Cullen, Deirdre Fagan and Melissa Sara Smith co-presented "The Unexpected Partnership Between Math and English: A Public Reflection" as part of a panel with Victor Piercey, Anil Venkatesh and Erin Benander at the 2016 MichMATYC Fall Conference.
- Janet Vizina-Roubal presented *Forming a Therapeutic Alliance Online: Challenges and Necessity* and Michael Berghoef presented *We're HIP, But Could be HIPper: Leveraging High Impact Social Work Collaborations* at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education in Atlanta, Ga.
- Twelve Music Industry Management students have received the NAMM President's Innovation Award which will assist them in attending the 2017 NAMM Show, a global music products tradeshow in Anaheim, Calif.
- Mark Wilson was chief referee for the 41<sup>st</sup> Ryder Cup at Hazeltine National Golf. He looked back at the rulings from that tournament in an article in the *PGA Magazine's* November issue.
- Curtis Smith was inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy during their annual meeting in Hollywood, Fla.
- Thomas Dowling has been appointed to a two-year term on the Editorial Board of *Clinical Pharmacokinetics*.
- Megan Biller presented "Maintaining Professionalism in Social Media" at the STEMtech conference in Philadelphia.

- Construction Management graduate Brad Laackman, president and CEO of Honor Construction, received the Epic Award as the 2016 Veteran Owned Business of the Year from the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Stacy Anderson and Dejah Rubel presented “Even Catalogers Get the Blues: Implementing RDA Best Practices for Music Cataloging” at the Michigan Academic Library Association’s RDA Pop-Up Conference.
- David Damari, along with faculty, students and alumni from the Michigan College of Optometry, were well represented at the American Academy of Optometry Annual Meeting in Anaheim, Calif. Collectively they presented 10 posters and five lecture sessions.
- Karen Royster-James presented “Data, Scheduling, and Reports ... Oh My!” at the Michigan College English Association Conference and Michigan Writing Center Association Ideas Exchange.
- Human Resources and the Staff Center for Training & Development hosted the Michigan University and College Human Resources Organizational Development Roundtable bi-annual conference.
- After the fall season the men's golf team is 4<sup>th</sup> in the Division II Rankings and 15<sup>th</sup> in the Division II Coaches Poll.
- Steve Stratton was re-elected to a one-year term as a member of the Michigan Public Employer Labor Relations Association board, his 20<sup>th</sup> year serving the organization.
- Interior Design students Rachel Fodell, Madison Gentry, Molly Kalep, Jenny Kang and Ashley Newton won both Best Craftsmanship and Best of Show in the International Interior Design Association Michigan chapter’s Finish2Fashion event.
- Art Education student Maggie Livengood received the National Preservice Art Educator Award, the National Art Education Association’s highest student honor.
- Michael McCulloch was the featured speaker for The Road to Rebellion Series: Understanding 1967 Detroit, exploring the legacy of segregated housing in Detroit held at The Wright Museum.
- Donna St. John opened a solo exhibition at the Saugatuck Center for the Arts, *Tributes of Authentic Heroism: Investigation of Grace, Vision, Clarity & Purpose*.
- Miranda Graham ('13, MFA) was featured in the latest issue of *Poets/Artists* for her inclusion in *Chévere*, an exhibition at the upcoming Art Basel event in Miami.
- Laura Niece ('03, BFA Furniture Design), a senior designer with Otto & Moore Furniture Designers, won top honors in the Bedroom category of the American Society of Furniture Designers Pinnacle Awards. The Criteria Collection she co-designed won in the Major Collections category.
- The Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts was awarded a grant from the Wege Foundation and received a gift from the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Foundation to support its 2017 exhibitions and programs including US IS THEM: Art from the Pizzuti Collection and Here + Now, which opens in January 2017.
- UICA Arts has partnered with the Children’s Healing Center to provide monthly film-focused entertainment in a safe, clean and engaging environment to Grand Rapids’ children with weak immune systems.
- Admissions recruiters attended the Detroit Decision Day at the Detroit Edison Academy, where more than 2,200 students applied and over 1,300 were offered admission.
- Ferris has been named one of the Top 100 National Testing Centers for overall testing process integrity and is one of the top 100 centers administering the most CLEP exams.
- Fall 2016 Dawg Days had the highest attendance compared to any past fall semester with 990 total guests on campus. Overall, 403 of these were students. The November 12<sup>th</sup> Dawg Day had a record attendance of 456 total guests.
- The Web Content team has partnered with Information Technology staff to begin an

extensive Electronic Information Technology systems audit to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- The Faculty and Staff Annual Campaign is underway to encourage support for our students and programs. More information is available [here](#).
- Student Outreach fundraisers this fall have made 33,612 calls, contacting alumni donors, non-donors and non-alumni athletic donors. The callers made process changes that have led to a 64% pledge fulfillment rate compared to a 21% pledge fulfillment rate at this time last year.
- Jeff Fisher (COB '97) and Vito Ciaramellano (COB '04) have made a major gift to the University for the Center for Athletics Performance.
- Roger (P '64) and Betty Anderson have made a major gift to build a clean room in the College of Pharmacy Hagerman Building. This will support scientific research in a controlled environment that has a low level of pollutants.
- The 2016 [television commercial](#) has been popular on two of Ferris State's main social media platforms, Facebook and YouTube. The YouTube video has been viewed more than 19,000 times in a little more than a month. Uploaded directly to Facebook, the commercial has been viewed more than 81,000 times.

Throughout the semester your work to enhance our students' education, to create extraordinary opportunities for them and to help advance our University is much appreciated. I encourage you to review the entire list of accomplishments [here](#), as the above is only a very small sampling of your work.

### **Construction Update**

Thank you for your understanding with the inconveniences created by the major construction projects underway on the Big Rapids campus. Fall weather has been mild and aided in the significant progress on the North Hall residence hall. Updated construction photos and a construction webcam is accessible [here](#). Construction began on the Swan Annex addition and renovation this past week. A similar website has been developed for this project and is accessible [here](#).

### **Athletics**

The men's football team concluded one of the most successful and longest seasons in Ferris State history Saturday in a heartbreaking 35-20 loss to Northwest Missouri State, the top-ranked football team in the nation. With a 12-3 record on the season, and winning eight of their final nine games, Head Coach Tony Annese and his student-athletes reached the semifinals for only the second time in school history and the first time since 1995. Our football team has accomplished so very much this year, and we are immensely proud of them. Please join me in congratulating Coach Annese, the entire football coaching staff and these student-athletes on their remarkable season.

In addition to the team success of our athletic programs this season, several of our student-athletes have received national accolades. Football defensive lineman Zach Seiler was named to the 2016 American Football Coaches Association Division II All-America Second Team. In addition, volleyball setter Stephanie Sikorski earned American Volleyball Coaches Association Division II All-America honors for the second consecutive year and outside hitter Allyson Cappel received All-America Honorable Mention recognition. She is one of only three rookies in the entire country to garner All-America status. These students' outstanding performance speaks volumes not only about their inherent athletic talents, but also the coaching and support they receive on the field and in the classroom.

David L. Eisler, president