

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 7, 2016

Friday's Foundation for Excellence Benefit was a truly memorable evening for Ferris State University. DeVos Place in Grand Rapids was filled with more than 600 friends and supporters of the University celebrating the 25th anniversary of The Ferris Foundation. The night began with a short [video](#) highlighting the impact of The Ferris Foundation in supporting students, faculty and staff through philanthropy.

Foundation Faculty and Staff Merit Grants help enhance the quality of education at Ferris, funding research programs, pilot projects and other projects that advance the academic goals of the University. Faculty members Sean McCormick and Changqi Zhu shared the research they do with students funded by Ferris Foundation Merit Grants. The video presented highlighting their work is accessible [here](#).

Kendall College of Art and Design student Ashley Navarre spoke on behalf of the other 10 Opportunity Scholarship students on stage. Her words touched the hearts of many present. "I'm not sure there are words to accurately describe my gratitude," she said. "Before we start college, your donations give us hope. While we're in college, your gifts give us encouragement. And for the rest of our lives, you are an investment in our futures. My dreams have become more than dreams. They're becoming a reality."

For the third time in its history The Ferris Foundation awarded its Humanitarian Award, to Phil and Jocelyn Hagerman. These thoughts were included in my introduction of them. "Their gift of \$5 million demonstrates the power of philanthropy to transform our University. Their support for our College of Pharmacy, a cutting-edge program in informatics and the special students attracted to our program through the Hagerman Fellows are visible signs of what this power can accomplish. Like the students, faculty and staff of our College, we are very proud that our Pharmacy Building is named in their honor. Through their support and commitment to education, they are making an impactful difference for Ferris and for youth in their hometown of Flint." This [video](#) describes the work of the Hagerman Foundation and their efforts for people in Michigan.

At last year's Foundation Benefit we announced the Ferris Futures Scholarship Challenge, seeking to raise and match \$18 million in new gifts to endowed scholarships. This campaign began accepting gifts in July. In just four months through donor support we have raised \$1,834,903 in new gifts to endowed scholarships. At Friday evening's benefit John Hare, chair of The Ferris Foundation, presented a symbolic check for this amount.

This year's benefit included one additional very special announcement. Paul Boyer, chair of the Board of Trustees, Amanda Turkopp, president of the Alumni Board, and John Hare, Foundation Board chair, stood together on stage for this announcement, while Chair Boyer offered these remarks. "Each of us feels strongly about our University, the education we received, and the difference this education makes in the lives of our students. Today the Ferris Board of Trustees and The Ferris Foundation Board of Directors met together for an historic occasion. Tonight, we, along with support from the Ferris Alumni Association, are proud to share with you some exciting news. Beginning tonight, we are launching the University's first-ever comprehensive fundraising campaign entitled, "Now and Always: The Campaign for Ferris State University." It is our honor to present to you President Eisler this proclamation approved and signed by our Ferris Foundation Board and the Ferris Board of Trustees affirming our combined, enthusiastic support for this historic campaign."

Campaign chairs Stephanie Leonardos and Gary Granger then offered remarks on the campaign which will officially begin this spring. Themed around the concept of "Now and

Always,” the comprehensive campaign will have three broad goals – student scholarships, support for academic and student efforts, and support for efforts in our communities. Over the next few months we look forward to engaging you in helping to develop and define these objectives and in identifying alumni and friends whom we may contact for their support. During this time, we will also establish a final campaign goal and timeline. I very much look forward to those conversations.

Keynote speaker, Mr. Archie Manning, capped off the evening discussing the challenges and triumphs faced by his family, what leadership means, and how impactful we all can be as leaders in our work and communities.

This truly is an historic time for Ferris State University. The power of philanthropy through The Ferris Foundation has never been more evident than now. Together we can foster excellence for our students as we build support for them and the education we provide.

Veteran’s Day

This week we honor those who have served or currently serve in the United States Armed Forces. I want to thank everyone who has served our country, and celebrate the efforts of our faculty and staff on campus who assist our veterans and ease their transition from military to civilian life. Our University has a very proud tradition of helping veterans throughout its history. Today nearly 400 veterans and dependents are enrolled in classes to further their education and training. In addition, 53 students are enrolled in the Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps; 32 of these students are also members of the National Guard or Reserves.

We are very proud to serve our veterans, and their dependents in their educational pursuits at Ferris. To celebrate their service to our country, all veterans on campus and in the Big Rapids community are invited to our annual Veterans Breakfast this Friday, Nov. 11, at 8 a.m. in University Center 202. The speaker will be Matt McDaid, founder of Section 1776 and United States Marine Corps veteran.

On Sunday, Nov. 13, Scott Cohen and the FSU West Central Concert Band will present their 14th annual Veterans Concert in Williams Auditorium at 4 p.m. This is always a special, meaningful event, and I encourage you to attend.

Meeting Reminders

The Strategic Planning and Resource Council (SPARC) will meet this Tuesday, Nov. 8, in University Center 202B, beginning at 3 p.m. Their agenda includes enrollment and retention, a discussion with professor Tony Baker on encouraging college attendance and the upcoming comprehensive campaign. All are welcome to attend; you need not be a member of SPARC to participate in the meeting or discussions.

Each fall I host a budget forum to share information on federal and state economic trends, results from last year’s budget, our current budget and factors that could affect next year’s budget. As part of this year’s presentation, I will also be discussing the budget reduction process and efforts. This year’s forum is Thursday, Nov. 10, at 11 a.m. in University Center 202C. Everyone is invited to attend. I look forward to sharing this information with you and answering your questions.

Athletics

The 19th-ranked football squad brought home its first road victory at Hillsdale in 13 years on Saturday as the Bulldogs celebrated a 41-20 win. The Bulldogs will return home for the regular-season home finale against Saginaw Valley State this Saturday with kickoff set for 1 p.m. This will be a special game, as our team looks to secure a postseason playoff berth and Senior Day ceremonies will take place prior to the start of the game.

Women’s volleyball celebrated its third-straight Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) North Division Championship on Saturday as the team beat Saginaw

Valley State 3-0. The win was the women's 19th-straight overall this season, and they are currently ranked 20th nationally and the highest-ranked team in the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional Rankings. Congratulations to Coach Brandel-Wilhelm, coaches, and student athletes for this very exciting and successful season. Two more regular season home games remain this season at the Ewingleben Sports Arena Friday (Nov. 11) at 7 p.m. against Hillsdale and Saturday (Nov. 12) starting at 5 p.m. against Northwood.

David L. Eisler, president