

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
September 26, 2016

Homecoming

This past weekend was one of the best attended Homecomings in memory as faculty, staff, students, community members and many alumni enjoyed a truly beautiful fall day. There was much good feeling about our University as alumni gathered and reminisced about their experiences at Ferris. Among the many enjoyable tailgate activities was the College of Arts and Sciences Popcorn Contest, the College of Business, Pharmacy, the Office of Multicultural Student Services, and Alumni Reunion tents. Many people work very hard to plan and support the multiple activities of the weekend. Thank you for making this a welcoming and enjoyable experience.

Homecoming can be a powerful reminder of the difference a Ferris education can make for our students. Friday evening's annual Fall Reunion recognized some of the exceptional graduates you help guide and develop. The Pacesetter Award recognizes recent graduates, and both of this year's recipients demonstrate the impact Ferris has on diversity efforts in the region.

- Jonathan Barrera Mikulich, a graduate of both Ferris and Kendall, uses his creative design skills to create messaging to the Hispanic and Latino communities. <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/alumni/success/2015/mikulich/homepage.htm>
- Michael Noble overcame financial setbacks to realize his dream of developing an aspirational program for young African American men to encourage academic and athletic excellence and college attendance. <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/alumni/success/2015/noble/homepage.htm>

This year's Distinguished Alumni are unique in that beyond extraordinary career success they are each actively engaged with our University, giving of their time, talent and resources.

- Kevin Cross, CEO of the Linkfield and Cross Insurance Agency, has served as chair of both the Alumni Association and The Ferris Foundation, and helped support the re-establishment of the Ferris insurance program. He used the opportunity of receiving his award to recognize Professor Emeritus "Doc" Heeter.
- Mary Garvelink, founder and president of Commercial Design Engineering, with offices in Colorado and Wyoming, was the first woman honored as the national HVACR person of the year and is an emeriti board member of The Ferris Foundation. Together with her husband, John, they created a scholarship and capital improvement fund for the HVACR program. http://www.ferris.edu/giving/docs/2013_annual.pdf, page 4.
- Matt Nawrocki, founder and president of Vectors, with offices in Colorado and New Mexico, has an impressive record of helping others, and honored Professor Khagendra Thapa in his remarks. Together with his wife, Sara, a pharmacy alumna, they established the Nawrocki Gratitude Scholarship Endowment for Surveying Engineering students - <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2013/march/nawrocki.htm>
- Jeff Rowe, retired vice president of operations for Diplomat Pharmacy, chairs the Pharmacy Forward Committee which has raised over \$12 million for the College of Pharmacy. In his remarks he encouraged everyone to show their Bulldog Pride. Together with his wife, Annette, a Dental Hygiene alumna, they established the Rowe Joint Pharm.D./MBA Annual Scholarship. <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2015/may/rowe.htm>

- Jon Sprague, also a member of the Pharmacy Forward Committee, is the former dean of the Ohio Northern University College of Pharmacy and currently leads the Ohio Attorney General's Center for the Future of Forensic Science at Bowling Green State University.

Space constraints do not allow adequate recognition for each of these extraordinary people. The evening also honored the Golden Eagles of the 1966 graduating class. Homecoming included a special reunion of 1976 Pharmacy graduates who were also in attendance. This evening truly was a wonderful celebration of the difference and success a Ferris education helps foster.

Enrollment Forum

Last Thursday we had excellent attendance for an open forum on enrollment. In this presentation I provided a historical context for enrollment data and discussed the continued future decline in Michigan high school graduates. The slides for this presentation are accessible [here](#), (these are also available in a sticky note annotated [version](#)). Included in these materials are the steps we are taking to balance the University budget as a result of reduced tuition revenue. In the session attendees were asked to discuss and suggest ways to increase recruitment and retention of students at Ferris State University while the number students graduating from Michigan high schools continues to decline. The [suggestions](#) generated at this meeting are posted online. We welcome your best thinking on actions you can take to boost recruitment and retention. A template for submitting your ideas is accessible from this [site](#).

Much good work is currently underway in both recruitment and retention. Until this year we have successfully sustained and increased enrollment in a very difficult and competitive environment. If we are to continue to sustain and grow enrollment, it will require greater engagement from the entire campus community. I believe strongly there is significant need for the extraordinary career-based education we provide at Ferris State University. Our graduates demonstrate powerfully how a Ferris degree is indeed a pathway to success and achievement. Thank you in advance for sharing your ideas and for working to make a difference for our students, both present and future.

Faculty Listening Sessions

In my Founders' Day remarks I presented plans to spend much of this year listening to you, hearing your thoughts on our University, its present and future. The intent is to engage small groups of faculty from all campuses during the fall semester and staff during the spring. This is something I enjoy doing, and I very much look forward to listening and learning from your ideas. Invitations will be forthcoming via e-mail and inter-campus mail and when you receive an invitation please take time to attend. If the suggested times for you do not fit your schedule, we will work with you to find a time that does. Thank you for taking time to help me both learn and understand your perspective and thoughts on our University.

Applied Technology Center Anniversary

On Thursday evening Grand Rapids Community College and Ferris State University will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Applied Technology Center located on the GRCC campus. Dedicated in June 1991, this was the first two-year, four-year partnership of its kind in the state and is an inspired, innovative collaboration between education, business and industry. Our work at GRCC is a wonderful example of how Ferris State University is providing students access to high-quality education where they live and work. As part of the evening's program we will hear from Ferris alumnus Paul Flynn, vice president of operations at Gentex, who will be sharing his experience at the Applied Technology Center and the difference it has made in his career. Many, many people have worked and contributed to the success of our partnership, and this is an opportunity to celebrate the difference this has made for thousands of students. I want to

thank everyone who helped conceive, develop and grow our efforts at Grand Rapids Community College. This is truly an extraordinary example of how higher education should work together to help students.

FAFSA Changes

With changes in federal regulations, students can now file their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) beginning Oct. 1. In doing so, students can use earlier income and tax information, so there is no more waiting for taxes to be completed. As part of this earlier FAFSA submission we will begin sending financial aid award letters in early December or January. Please help us share this information with students, and if you or your students have any questions, please contact finaid@ferris.edu. This is a significant change in the work of our people in Scholarships and Financial Aid, and I want to commend and thank them for their efforts to help our students.

Workplace Survey

Today you should receive an invitation via e-mail to participate in a campus-wide workplace survey. This survey is part of our strategic plan efforts and is intended for all faculty and staff at all campuses including Kendall College of Art and Design. The survey is constructed so that no personal information will be recorded and individual responses will remain anonymous. I want to thank the faculty and staff who have developed this instrument and guided its distribution and collection. Thank you for taking time to provide your input.

Athletics

Women's volleyball opened its home GLIAC schedule with an exciting 3-0 victory over the Walsh Cavaliers on Friday afternoon and then defeated Olivet and Davenport on the road Saturday. Our football team had its long regular-season winning streak broken with a hard fought homecoming loss to Ashland, 39-31. The much anticipated arrival of Bulldog hockey season starts this Saturday and Sunday at home against Alabama Huntsville in a conference-opening WCHA series. Thank you for supporting our student athletes in both their academic and athletic endeavors.

David L. Eisler, president