

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
February 6, 2017

Our University hosted several remarkable events this past week. At the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts in Grand Rapids, the opening of Here + Now and US IS THEM: Art from the Pizzuti Collection, generated a tremendous reaction from the community. In response to these exhibitions, cultured.GR, an arts publication, organized a dinner for community members to discuss the artwork, and the Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archive hosted a breakfast to talk about the impact of these two exhibits. These events were an organic response from the community, as each group sought a space to have open dialogue about the serious and timely topics addressed by the artists. These powerful exhibits will be on display through March 31 and May 14, respectively.

Last week I had the opportunity to attend two memorable Festival of the Arts events in Big Rapids. Monday evening Professor Emeritus Marilyn Kiegley shared her photography of Michigan's Isle Royale. Her firsthand, intimate knowledge of this national park, in addition to her understanding of the unique terrain and environment, beautifully captures the serenity and solitude of nature there. Tuesday we welcomed Martin Lowenberg back on campus to share his story and experience of living through the horrors of the Holocaust. The riveting account of his family living under Nazi tyranny and the genocide of more than six million Jewish people and five million people of other faiths is a part of history that we must never forget. His love for America and his family, and message that love overcomes hate is an inspirational example of the triumph of the human spirit over unimaginable horror. The Festival of the Arts continues this week with scheduled events on campus and in the Big Rapids community. I encourage you to experience some of this remarkable Festival. Here is a sample of this week's events:

- *An Evening with Sergei Eisenstein on the 100th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution* – Monday, Feb. 6, 7 p.m. at the IRC Room 120
- *Introductory Welding for Artists Workshop with Dave Murray* – Tuesday, Feb. 7/14/21, 6-9 p.m. at Swan 116 Welding Lab
- *An Evening with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers* – Thursday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m. at Big Rapids Community Library
- *STAGE-M Presents Neil Simon's The Odd Couple* – Thursday-Saturday, Feb 9-11, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 12, 2:30 p.m. at Crossroads Charter Academy Auditorium
- *One Billion Rising Dance to Disrupt: Art in Protest of Violence Against Women and Girls* – Friday, Feb. 10, 5-8 p.m. at West Campus Community Center
- *Wine & Canvas Date Night* – Saturday, Feb. 11, 6-9 p.m. at Artworks
- *Trio Briosso* – Sunday, Feb. 12, 4 p.m. at Big Rapids First United Methodist Church

Black History Month

The Office of Multicultural Student Services is celebrating Black History Month throughout February. This Thursday writer and author Lawrence Ross will present a lecture entitled, "Blackballed: the Black and White Politics of Race on America's Campuses," from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the IRC Room 120. On Wednesday, Feb. 22, Ferris students will pay homage to trailblazers from the 1960s to the present day at the "Student Tribute: From Struggle to Progress?" in the University Center Rankin Lounge at 7 p.m. Both of these events are free and open to everyone on campus and in the community. More information is available [here](#).

Board of Trustees Appointments

December marked the final board meeting for Trustees Alisha Baker, Art Tebo and Erin Brown. Together they represent 28 years of service to Ferris, including 16 years of service for Art. It has been a privilege to work alongside Alisha, Erin and Art, and I have learned much from them. Last month Governor Rick Snyder announced three new appointments to the Ferris Board of Trustees. Our new trustees, Amna Seibold, LaShanda Thomas and Robert Hegbloom, will be on campus for board meetings this Thursday and Friday.

Mrs. Seibold is a graduate of Albion College and earned her master's degree in health administration from the University of Michigan. She is the director of Pathology at Mercy Health Saint Mary's in Grand Rapids. She has served as mayor of East Grand Rapids since 2011. Mrs. Thomas graduated from Michigan State University in Accounting and is the managing partner of The Clairmount Group. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha, the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Mr. Hegbloom is a Ferris alumnus with an associate degree in Automotive Service Technology and bachelor's degree in Automotive Management. He is president and CEO of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' Ram Truck Brand. Last May he received an Honorary Doctorate of Business and Industry at our spring commencement.

Please join me in welcoming these new members to our board. I am very grateful they are willing to invest their time, energy and talents in Ferris State University and look forward to working with them.

Athletics

Both our men's and women's basketball teams had a terrific weekend of play on the road Saturday against Wayne State. The women's team celebrated a 71-67 win, and the men's 82-65 victory is their 15th straight win and ties for the second-longest streak in school history. Our teams play the last four of their five regular season games at home starting this Thursday as the women take on Lake Superior State at 6 p.m., with the men's game at 8 p.m.

David L. Eisler, president