

President's Message to Campus

*Office of the President
November 3, 2017*

Now & Always Campaign Kick-Off

Next Thursday, Nov. 9, is an important day for the University as we publicly launch our first-ever comprehensive fundraising campaign “Now & Always: The Campaign for Ferris State University.”

The campus campaign announcement is at 11 a.m. in the University Center ballroom. The program includes personal stories or video segments for each of the campaign’s main goals - Investing in Students, Program Expansion and Innovation, and Building Partnerships. We will hear from our campaign co-chairs, Gary Granger and Jeff Rowe, along with the campaign video. Following this program, the celebration will continue throughout the University Center with food, music, games, and campaign-themed giveaways and materials. Please come, bring your colleagues and students, and discover what this campaign will mean for the future of Ferris State University.

Friday the campaign kickoff celebration continues at The Ferris Foundation for Excellence Benefit held at the DeVos Place in Grand Rapids. This annual event recognizes Foundation student scholarship recipients as well as faculty and staff merit grant recipients. The evening will feature special guest Aly Raisman, team captain of the gold medal winning 2012 and 2016 U.S. Olympic gymnastics teams. Please consider joining us for this important evening. Special ticket pricing is available for faculty, staff and emeriti. If this price is prohibitive for you to attend, please contact me so you can be present. More information about the benefit can be found on [The Ferris Foundation’s website](#).

Through much work and the efforts of many people, we are positioned to successfully conduct our first comprehensive fundraising campaign for Ferris State University. Through your continued collaboration, we can and will create a new tradition of donor support for our students and for your efforts – helping to transform our University and ensure its future. Thank you for your support of this campaign.

Veteran’s Day Celebrations

In observance of Veteran’s Day, we will honor all veterans and those currently serving in our military with a free Veterans Breakfast in the University Center Room 202 on Friday, Nov. 10, at 8 a.m. Joining us will be recent [Congressional Medal of Honor recipient James McCloughan](#), from South Haven, who served in the U.S. Army as a medic in Vietnam. I encourage you to read his citation at the link above. This is a remarkable story of heroism and valor in which he repeatedly risked his own life to save those of his fellow soldiers. All student, faculty and staff veterans, in addition to veterans in the greater Big Rapids community, are invited. If you know a veteran, encourage them to attend. If you are not a veteran, but would like to hear this American hero speak, please join us.

On Sunday, Nov. 12, the West Central Concert Band under the direction of Scott Cohen will perform its 15th annual Veteran’s Day Concert. Their program is a collection of patriotic selections honoring all future, current and retired Armed Service members. This is a moving tribute to our veterans and a reminder of the vital role active military personnel provide for our nation. [More information on their concert is accessible here](#).

I want to thank everyone who has served or currently serves our country in the United States Armed Forces, the Armed Forces Reserve and National Guard.

This is also a time to appreciate everyone at our University who assists veterans on our campuses with their educational pursuits upon return to civilian life.

United Way

This year marks the 65th anniversary for the Mecosta-Osceola United Way, which began as the “Community Chest” in 1952. Ferris State University has partnered with our local United Way for many, many years to help our neighbors in Mecosta and Osceola Counties. If you have not already made a donation to the United Way, I encourage you to do so. There have been a number of fundraising activities across campus with several fundraisers happening this month inside the Timme Center for Student Services. All of the proceeds raised are contributions to our United Way campaign:

- Tuesday, Nov. 7, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., CSS 302: *Chili and Soup Social* - \$5/person. Contact Heidi Wisby, x2115
- Thursday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., CSS 101FF: *Farm Stand sale (baked goods, crafts, homemade jams, salsa, pickles, etc.) and Silent Auction.*
- Friday, Nov. 17, 1-3 p.m., CSS 2nd Floor: *Popcorn Day* with fresh bags of popcorn for sale, \$1 each.

Thank you to everyone who has already made a contribution, and to Terri Cook, Sheri Edstrom, Linda Hayes, Laurie Mumby, Debi Whitman and Heidi Wisby for organizing these fundraising events and providing multiple, enjoyable ways for faculty, staff and students to be involved. Your gift and efforts for the United Way make an important difference for many people in our community.

Strategic Planning

This is the fourth year of work on our University strategic plan, “Living Our Values.” After the first of the year, we will begin the initial steps on developing our next strategic plan, which will be the successor to our current plan in fall 2019.

To help guide this process we will work with Dr. Patricia Cormier, president emerita of Longwood University in Virginia. Along with considerable experience, she brings a unique understanding of strategic planning and will be a wonderful facilitator for us moving forward. Dr. Cormier seeks to facilitate a process that builds from strength, promise and opportunity to plan for our future.

Experience indicates that strategic planning is most successful when driven by thoughtful listening to our people and our constituencies. Before we begin, she will spend considerable effort to hear the voices of faculty, staff, administrators, boards and the external community who will assist in shaping the process resulting in a clear, concise, strategic position for Ferris.

Dr. Cormier will be on the Big Rapids campus Monday and Tuesday, November 13 and 14. During this visit she will conduct two open forums. These are open to everyone at the University. The first will be Monday, Nov. 13, from 2 to 3 p.m. in the University Center Room 209. The second will be held as part of the Strategic Planning and Resource Council meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 14, at 3 p.m. in UC Room 202. If you have an interest in strategic planning, or would like to share your thoughts on how we should approach our next strategic plan, I am hopeful you will attend. Please participate at this critical time and come prepared to freely express your thoughts to Dr. Cormier.

Athletics

Our nationally ranked women's volleyball team will host Saginaw Valley State tonight at 7 p.m. and Lake Superior State on Saturday at 3 p.m. inside the Ewigleben Sports Arena. The team is 17-6 overall and 10-2 in the GLIAC. These are the last two home games of the regular season. If you have the opportunity, support these outstanding student-athletes.

Our football team has a record of 7-1 and is also nationally ranked. They will play Davenport University in Grand Rapids at noon on Saturday. This is the first time we have played Davenport, which is a new member of the GLIAC conference. If you are in the Grand Rapids area please support our team as they seek to return to the NCAA Division II football playoffs.

The women's soccer team celebrated the end of their regular season last Friday with an exciting 1-0 victory at home against regionally top-ranked Grand Valley State. This well-deserved and hard-fought win is only the fourth time in program history and the first time since 2002 that the women's soccer team has defeated GVSU. On Tuesday the team lost 1-2 in a very close game against Saginaw Valley in the GLIAC post-season tournament. Congratulations to Head Coach Andy McCaslin and all of the soccer student-athletes for an extraordinary season.

David L. Eisler, president