

President's Message to Campus

Office of the President
May 7, 2018

There is always a wonderful sense of anticipation and excitement at the end of the semester. Many events took place last week that highlighted our students and their accomplishments. There were celebratory dinners and receptions, the Honors Program senior symposium, Kendall College's Excellence Awards and 90th Anniversary Announcements, doctoral hooding ceremonies, pinning ceremonies, many recognition events for graduates, including the LGBTQ+ Resource Center's first-ever lavender graduation ceremony and the OMSS graduation celebration.

All of these events, and the many others that took place exemplify what happens at our University throughout the entire year – much hard work and commitment to our students, and the dedicated efforts of our faculty and staff that go above and beyond to help them achieve success. Thank you to all faculty and staff for creating a positive atmosphere for growth and a supportive learning environment for our students.

Commencement

We had a memorable weekend celebrating the nearly 2,000 graduates who crossed the stage at five commencement ceremonies in Big Rapids and at Kendall's ceremony in Grand Rapids. At the commencements in Big Rapids, I had the privilege of sharing the stories of seven graduates and the challenges they overcame to reach graduation. Their stories were inspirational and a testament to faculty and staff who played a key role in helping them achieve their educational aspirations. One example I shared was of a College of Arts and Sciences graduate. Placed into foster care at just two days old, he lived in nine different foster homes until he turned 18 and aged out of foster care. With the help of positive role models in his life, and his determination to help other children in the foster care system, he graduated with his bachelor's degree in Social Work and has already begun working at the Macomb County Juvenile Detention Center as a youth specialist. I encourage you to read more about this story and the other [graduate stories](#) shared. They are heartwarming examples of how we are changing lives at Ferris State University.

It also was an honor to award honorary doctorates to Alex Gorsky, CEO and chairman of the board at Johnson & Johnson, philanthropists Robert and Ellen Thompson, and Teresa McKay, College of Business alumna and director of the Department of Defense Finance and Accounting Services. These are extraordinary individuals who uniquely support our students and our University. Their [commencement remarks](#) are available online.

Many, many people contributed to the success of the commencement ceremonies. Thank you to everyone who made this day special for our graduates.

15th Annual Police Memorial

Tomorrow the University is hosting the 15th annual Police Memorial Ceremony at 9 a.m. in front of FLITE. This is a meaningful opportunity to recognize and honor those who currently serve in law enforcement and those who have sacrificed their lives to protect their community and to keep us all safe. The traditional program includes an honor guard, a 21-gun salute, the playing of "Taps," lowering of the U.S. flag and the placement of a wreath. Please come and recognize officers representing local, county, state and federal departments who will join our campus police for this moving ceremony.

Good News

As busy as the end of the semester can be, our faculty, staff and students continue to do great things within our University community and beyond. Special congratulations go to faculty member Brad Isler who was selected as the 2018 recipient of the Michigan Academic Advising Association Faculty Advising Award. This month's [Good News list](#) is available online. When you have a few moments, please read about all of the good works happening within our Ferris community.

Closing Thoughts

I want to thank each member of our University community for what has been a remarkable academic year, one filled with many accomplishments and achievements. Our academic programs continue to excel at national rankings and receive specialized accreditations. Ferris athletic teams experienced tremendous and historic success this year. North Hall, the first new residence hall built in 50 years, welcomed its first students. The Swan Annex construction will be completed in August providing much needed space to programs in advanced manufacturing, mechanical engineering technology and welding engineering technology. Renovations to the Student Recreation Center are underway and will be an enhancement to our wellness efforts. The Center for Academic Literacies will be moving into FLITE, combining important resources for our students in an effort to holistically help each student succeed. We have much to be excited about and proud of, and I look forward to continuing these successes and working with you next year.

Work will continue on campus through the spring and summer months as students continue their education and we prepare to welcome new and returning students for the fall 2018 semester. It is my hope that, over the next few months, you have time for activities that help you find balance and fulfillment.

Thank you very much for your hard work and dedication – it makes an important difference for our students, our academic and support efforts, and for our university. Have a wonderful summer.

David L. Eisler, president