

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
February 1, 2005

It seems difficult to believe that February has already arrived. There is much good news regarding Ferris State University that I want to share with you. These are but a few of the many, many examples of good work and hard effort that demonstrate the extra effort you make to help our University be a special place.

Good News and Good Efforts

Last week members of our Optometry faculty and staff spent three evenings calling their alumni. These efforts netted over \$170,000 in pledges, a truly remarkable achievement. Special thanks go to Jamie Brady, Christine Kamen, Carla Miller, Kaci Baars, Dr. Robert Buckingham, Dr. Philip Walling, Dr. Nancy Peterson-Klein, Dr. Michael Keating, Dr. Bruce Morgan, Dr. James Saladin, Dr. Randy Vance, Maureen Watson, Dr. Michael Cron, Dr. Walter Betts, Dr. Robert Carter, Dr. Renee Mika and Dean Kevin Alexander for helping to develop this support for our new facility. As a part of our fundraising efforts new visuals of this building project have been created. We are very hopeful that our efforts for this much needed facility will be accompanied by support from the legislature during this session.

Ferris State University is included in an article in the February issue of the *Business Officer* magazine, published by NACUBO (National Association of College and University Business Officers). Last year the Ferris Foundation earned a remarkable 23.7% on its endowment investments. This was the eighth best performance by any foundation in the country and increased the value of our endowment to \$23 million. Our appreciation goes to the investment committee of the Ferris Foundation and the Fund Evaluation Group, LLC, which manage these funds. This is a remarkable achievement and will provide additional support for faculty and staff grants and scholarships for students. Additional information on this success is available here - <http://www.ferris.edu/president/news/endowment.doc>

The opportunity has developed to purchase the Forest Hills Trailer Park, which is south of our campus and contiguous to the Racquet Facility. This is a property of approximately 30 acres that also adjoins a portion of our campus southern boundary and the Muskegon River. While there are not immediate campus plans for this area, I believe this is in the best long-term interests of our University. Hopefully we will be able to complete this purchase before the end of February.

On Friday Governor Granholm appointed two new members to our Board of Trustees. Both are graduates and distinguished alumni of Ferris State University. George Menoutes, a graduate of the College of Pharmacy, has 45 years experience in the pharmacy profession and a history of civic and state involvement. As a student at Ferris he served as class president and captain of the football team. Ron Snead is a biology graduate and currently serves as Vice President of Corporate Relations for Dixien, a supplier of metal stampings and plastic molded parts to the automotive industry. As a student at Ferris he served as president of the NAACP chapter and vice president of the All-College Student Government. George Menoutes and Ron Snead succeed Trustees Louis Meuwenberg and Bruce Parsons. Additional information on our new trustees is available here - <http://www.ferris.edu/president/news/newBOT2005.doc>

Enrollment is up for winter semester 2005 at Ferris. This is the first winter semester when we have enrolled more than 11,000 students. The greatest factors behind this are strong growth patterns in Grand Rapids and off-campus, together with increased retention of students throughout the University. Thank you for your efforts to help our students adjust to and succeed in college. The news release on this story is available here - <http://www.ferris.edu/president/news/WinterEnrollment2005.doc>

Please Help

I don't know if you have had the opportunity to read the firsthand reports from survivors of the tsunami in Southeast Asia. A former colleague of mine was swept up in these waves of destruction, and fortunately survived. His account of the devastation and suffering is truly horrific. This tragedy is truly beyond imagination and the desperate need of many people will be ongoing for quite some time.

If you have already given to the rescue effort, thank you for helping to make a difference. If you have not, Vice President Dan Burcham is heading campus efforts for support. I would encourage you to contact him for further information on donations and volunteer needs.

Planning Update

In my last message I shared a synthesis of the fall university-wide task force recommendations. This identified six immediate goals for Ferris State University and an outline for our annual planning process. Based on these materials, Unit Action Planning documents were distributed in mid-January and are available here - <http://www.ferris.edu/president/planning200506.htm> This year's approach seeks to build connections between strategic directions and annual efforts, create discussions within and across divisions, and further reduce planning paperwork.

The Unit Action Planning divisional reports will be presented in sessions open to the entire University community. Academic Affairs is scheduled for Thursday, March 31st.

Administration and Finance, Student Affairs, and University Advancement and Marketing will be the morning of Friday, April 1st. Governmental Relations/General Counsel and FSU-Grand Rapids will be the afternoon of April 1st. If your schedule permits I would encourage you to attend these information and discussion sessions in Rankin Room 238.

Additional information on our planning activities is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/planning2005.htm> These materials include our sessions on vision, links to complete task force materials, presentations and reports, campus facility master plans for Big Rapids and Grand Rapids, and the Unit Action Planning materials. I appreciate that many of you have taken time to read and comment on these materials. If you have not yet done so I would very much appreciate hearing from you.

With your help and support we are working to create a university where planning leads to action. My hope is that through our combined efforts we can build a university that is centered on learning. We are making progress and I am excited by your involvement and our prospects for success.

There are many, many other wonderful efforts of achievements that are happening at Ferris State University beyond those listed here. If you would like to share your news on good efforts with me, please drop me a note or send me an email. Thank you for the difference you make for our students and our programs. I am honored to work with you for Ferris.

Best wishes,

Dave