

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
April 20, 2009

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## **Ferris Cares**

As the economic reality we face here in Michigan continues to grow I have seen firsthand its impact on Ferris students - particularly those whose families have lost their jobs, or who have lost their own employment. These are especially difficult circumstances, as their financial aid is based upon earnings they no longer have. With so much already invested in their education, it is of vital importance to help bridge such a period of unanticipated hardship.

On Thursday, Ferris Foundation Chair and Board of Trustee member Sueann Walz announced the Foundation's "Ferris Cares - Opportunity @ 125" initiative. This is a concerted effort to raise \$250,000 for scholarships to help those students who have been most severely affected by the economic downturn. The Foundation announced this effort now so students will know about the availability of these funds before leaving at the end of the academic year.

In her remarks, Mrs. Walz talked about the difference a Ferris education makes in the lives of so many students. She noted that, "For nearly 125 years, Ferris State has built lives of unimagined opportunity through the opportunities of a wonderful education."

What I hear over and over from faculty and staff, is how much Ferris State University cares about students. This is a sentiment we need to nurture and draw upon during a time when our students face unprecedented financial challenges. The goal is to raise at least \$50,000 for this fund from the campus community. There already are commitments for \$18,500, so we are off to a remarkable start. Please consider making a contribution to this important initiative. To do so, contact our Development office at ext. 3815 or make an online gift by clicking on the giving icon on the Ferris home page.

Additionally I want to thank Foundation Chair-Elect Dick Shaw, and Acting Vice President of Academic Affairs Dan Burcham for their work on this campaign and remarks at the kick-off. Thank you in advance for helping our students.

## **Budget Forums**

On Tuesday, April 28, and Friday, May 1, I will be holding budget update forums in the Rankin Center's Centennial Dining Room, beginning at noon. During these sessions, we will focus on a summary of the budget reduction suggestions gathered from throughout the campus. These have been prioritized by the Strategic Planning and Resource Council, and we would like to give you the opportunity to do the same. The summarized list is accessible at - <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/strategic/BudgetReductionSuggestionsSummary2009.pdf>

During these sessions, participants will be asked to prioritize the list of recommendations in light of three possible scenarios - a \$5 million revenue shortfall; a \$7.5 million shortfall; and a \$10 million shortfall. These priorities will help with decision-making as we work to limit tuition increases for next year to help our students in these challenging economic times. I will also

provide updated information on actions in Lansing and Washington regarding the state budget and economic stimulus funds.

Please note that lunch will not be provided during this meeting. One of the more frequent budget reduction suggestions received is to reduce food at meetings, something we can certainly adopt. I hope that you will bring a sack lunch and join us for these very important budget forums.

### **Distinguished Staff and Team Awards**

Please join me in congratulating the recipients of this year's Distinguished Staff and Team Awards. These individuals and team members embody the kind of commitment to our core values, including collaboration and excellence, which "distinguishes" Ferris from other universities. This recognition results from your nominations and selection by the Distinguished Staff Committee.

#### Distinguished Staff Awards

- Steve Johnson, Equipment Technician, College of Technology
- Angela Mishler, Senior Recruiting Officer, Enrollment Services
- William Potter, Dean, University College
- Paula Rushford, Advancement Services Accountant, University Advancement and Marketing
- Karen Youngs, Custodian, Physical Plant

#### Distinguished Team Award

Dining Services Community Education Engagement Team - Craig Bowman, Doni Cassidy, Mary Cook, Lora Ellison, Carol Gilders, Lori Helmer, Julia Knopf, Mark Lane, Mike Langan, Julie Modene, Rick Modene, Cindy Ottobre, Stephanie Patton, Yvonne Seiter, Laura Snyder, Jeannie Tollenaar, Betty Traynor

The Distinguished Staff and Team Awards Committee did a remarkable job evaluating many worthy nominees and bringing forward their recommendations. I want to thank the members of this committee - Pepper Bonnett, Mike McKay, Ruth Ridderman, Linda Telfer and Deb Vance. Congratulations to all the awardees, nominees and committee members.

### **Annual Employee Service Award Dessert Celebration**

Please join the Ferris campus community on Wednesday, April 29, from 3-5 p.m. at the Rankin Center Dome Room for our annual Employee Service Award Dessert Celebration. We will be recognizing employees who have completed five-year increments of full-time continuous service. We will also honor other important employee achievements and awards, including the Distinguished Staff, Distinguished Team and Distinguished Teacher awards.

Service award recipients will be shown through a special slide show. Last year we brought back the tradition of serving Strawberry Pie and we will be doing so again. (Please contact Elaine Kamptner at ext. 2504 if you have special dietary needs). RSVP at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/forms/homepage.htm> or call Human Resources at ext. 2150. We ask that you reserve your place by Monday morning, April 27.

This is an opportunity for our University to say thank you for the wonderful work that you do. I'm hopeful you will join us in this special celebration, expressing our thanks and congratulating our colleagues. I look forward to seeing you there.

### **Commencement Stories**

Do you know someone who will be graduating during our upcoming May Commencement who has overcome significant obstacles, demonstrated outstanding achievement, or has a unique or special story regarding their education? If you know such a student, co-worker, friend or colleague, I would very much like to hear from you. Commencement is about students. To help focus on the humanity of this event, at each ceremony I try to highlight one or more of our graduating seniors whose path to a degree tells a story that can be inspirational or instructive for others. Please e-mail me at [eislerd@ferris.edu](mailto:eislerd@ferris.edu).

Meeting these students is an extraordinary and at times quite an emotional experience. Examples of the kind of amazing students we have help me tell the broader story of our University and the opportunity we provide. Thanks for helping make this connection.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler  
President