

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
May 9, 2011

Commencement

Friday and Saturday we recognized a record number of graduates at six commencement ceremonies in Big Rapids and Grand Rapids. Additionally, Ferris graduates were recognized at commencements at a number of our community college partners across the state. Finally, we were greeted with some spring weather to go with the high spirits of our graduates and their families.

Commencement is a time when we can see the difference a Ferris education makes for students. The opportunity we provide is at the core of our values and is reflected in our graduates and their stories. At each of the Big Rapids commencement ceremonies I shared stories of our extraordinary graduating students. They have overcome obstacles to achieve remarkable accomplishments. Those remarks are accessible here -

<http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/presentations.htm>

It was a pleasure to have members of our Board of Trustees on campus for commencement. During their special meeting on Friday they accepted a \$200,000 grant from the Grand Rapids Foundation, and a \$200,000 grant from the Steelcase Foundation for our renovation of the historic Federal Building in Grand Rapids. They also accepted a federal grant to research energy-efficient housing in partnership with the Dow Chemical Company, Michigan State University and Habitat for Humanity. Finally, they approved the establishment of bus service between Grand Rapids and Big Rapids beginning with the fall semester.

Share Your Success

Last week I completed the annual series of Share Your Success sessions in University colleges and divisions. It has been a great pleasure to hear about your many achievements and share those with the Ferris community. Here are a few of the highlights that faculty and staff shared during these final sessions.

Administration and Finance

- Rick Christner noted that a new contract with Staples will save the University an estimated \$600,000 on office supplies over five years.
- Second and third shift custodians very much appreciate the assistance they receive from student employees in their work to keep our buildings clean.
- Dan Sovinski reported that various system efficiencies and energy recovery systems have saved the University approximately \$69,500.
- Mark Eichenberg credited the Asset Management roofing program with reducing the cost of roof repairs by \$76,000 a year by avoiding emergency roof repairs.
- Mike Grandy said that W2s are now available electronically through MyFSU.
- Jim White noted that new signs and posts have been installed around the Santer Nature Preserve.

- Kevin Jackson reported that last fall's change to in-house domestic hot water at Center Ice saved \$20,000.
- Karen Simmons is proud of the AiM work order system; it helped the MCO building project go smoothly.
- Walt Smith pointed out that painting Ward Hall with in-house staff saved the University about \$60,000.
- Lisa Ortiz, Jon Shaffer and Joanne Robertson noted the Office of Housing and Residence Life received the Outstanding Commitment to Diversity award from the Minority and Friends network as part of the national Oshkosh Placement Exchange. Lisa was elected President of the Great Lakes Association of Housing Officers.
- Lori Helmer reported that Ferris' Dining Services scored above the national mean on a recent benchmarking survey.
- Kevin Jackson said that by proactively managing the custodial supply inventory, Residential Life/Physical Plant has significantly decreased inventory by more than 30 percent and is moving toward a goal of standardizing chemicals in its goal of being a "green" and sustainable custodial operation.
- Denise Grinnel noted that all faculty and staff had their Lotus Notes space doubled this spring.
- Mike Hughes noted the contract extension with Wolverine Power for electric power, which will save \$600,000 over the next two years.

Kendall College of Art and Design

- Israel Davis and the Kendall Clay Collective Club raised more than \$4,000 to help students attend the Wood and Reduction Fire Workshops at Ox-Bow in Saugatuck, and the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conference in Philadelphia.
- Christine Brown reported that Career Services hosted 35 events this year including Career Days, and has implemented Career-Link and InterviewStream.
- Olivia Snyder shared that senior Jessica Kronlein won first prize in the Michigan International Interior Design Association Virginia North Student Design Competition. The project was a sustainable residence designed to accommodate an aging demographics. Senior Quo Quach won first place in the International American Society of Interior Designers Student Competition for a space focused on wellness.
- Patricia Constantine reported that the fine arts professional practices class participated in a variety of community service projects including the Memory Project to draw or paint portraits for students in orphanages.
- Diane Zeeuw noted that out of 15 applications two MFA students, Sarah Knill and Steven Vinson, won full Kendall scholarships for summer artist residencies at the Golden Apple Art Residency in Maine. The owners of the Golden Apple were so impressed they funded a full scholarship for a third Kendall student, Taylor Greenfield.
- Tom Post said the Painting Cub designed and then worked with grade school students to paint an on-site mural at Covell Elementary School.
- Jon McDonald reported on the development of the new Medical Illustration program.
- Sarah Joseph noted that during ArtPrize 2010 more than 25,000 people visited Kendall's galleries.

- Elena Tislerics, Shannon Averill and student interns won Addy awards.
- Suzanne Eberle served two years as a member of the planning committee for the three-day Midwest Art History Society Conference held this April in Grand Rapids and sponsored in part by Kendall. Thirteen Art History majors attended.
- Kristen Morrison, Donna St. John and Cindy Todd discussed several collaborations involving Kendall, including a National Endowment for the Arts Grants with matching grant from Farmers Insurance Ground that involves the Grand Rapids Art Museum and Grand Rapids Public Schools to send all GRPS 3rd grade students to GRAM.
- A summer class taught by Mark Mulder produced a hand-crafted wooden canoe that was raffled off last summer and raised \$2,200.
- Phil Renato reported on the work of the Kendall SPARC Committee.
- Brenda Sipe said that 56 Grand Rapids Public School students will receive grants to attend summer Continuing Studies classes in partnership with GRPS.
- Ron Riksen shared that this is the 25th year Graphic Design students have created the summer picnic poster for the Varnum, Riddering, Schmidt and Howlett summer picnic.
- Max Shangle reported that Kendall student Tristan Sisbach's submission was the winning entry in the Big Rapids Festival of the Arts sculpture competition.

Governmental Relations and General Counsel

- Jody Greco reported on April's Lansing Legislative Luncheon with more than 160 people in attendance.
- Richelle Boerma noted that the department hosted the community-wide Founders' Day Ice Cream Social that served more than 900 community members, students, faculty, staff and emeriti during Welcome Back Week.
- Cindy Bauman, Ken Plas and Miles Postema helped conduct various training sessions on campus training ranging from copyright issues to academic misconduct.
- Steve Stratton worked with Human Resources to improve the supervisory training track and provide "advanced level" education.
- Sharon Hopper provided training regarding search committees and the on-line employment process, as well as reviewed the hiring process of 248 positions.

University Advancement and Marketing

- Jeremy Mishler noted that Alumni Relations and Advancement Services launched a new Ferris Forward Facebook site on March 29.
- Mary Kay MacIver advised that Ferris' Alumni Association Facebook page has approximately 2,000 members, and the Ferris State University Facebook page has more than 14,500 members.
- Bill Bitzinger is incorporating more interviews in videos for the University, such as for the "I'm a Bulldog" campaign, and Michigan College of Optometry building campaign.
- Kim Erickson reported that The Ferris Foundation awarded seven merit scholarships, and that the electronic RFP format is working extremely well.
- Christa Bull was pleased to report that the *Higher Education Marketing Report* has recognized Marketing and Communications' Spring 2010 *Ferris Magazine* entry with a gold award. The 125th Anniversary Report submission received a merit award.

- Through Ferris' connection to the Michigan American Council on Education Network and Leah Nixon's work on the network's public relations subcommittee, Ferris faculty member Gloria Lukusa-Barnett will be featured in an upcoming video highlighting women making a difference, and serving as role models in higher education.
- Amy Packard advised that the on-line registration for events is working extremely well. More than 400 people signed up for last year's successful Michigan Adventure alumni event.
- Brandi Behrenwald reported that they have received 60 RSVPs for the Detroit Tiger alumni event even before the hard copy invitation has been mailed.
- Will Goode said that eight or nine athletic teams have participated in phonathons to follow-up the "I'm a Bulldog" October mailing. Student-athletes have made more than 700 calls to former student-athletes.
- Karen Lerew solicited and received a seven-figure planned gift from an individual as well as facilitated a major gift from the same donor to the GRCC Foundation.
- Ted Halm reported that the Content Management System has integrated 50-60 websites including the Diversity and Inclusion Office, charter schools and all academic colleges except the College of Business, which will be converted in the near future. Also, in partnership with Admission, he is working on a mobile-friendly website.

Student Affairs

- Matt Chaney reported that the Office of Multicultural Student Services initiated a very positive relationship with the Hispanic Center of West Michigan, and coordinated outreach to Union High School and Ottawa Hills High School. Many of these students may qualify for TIP funding.
- Sara Dew noted that scholarship offers this year are up 12 percent, and scholarship accepts are up 43 percent from last year.
- Mike Cairns collaborated with a variety of departments and the local community to receive two faculty/staff diversity mini-grants for the Spring 2011 Sexual Awareness and Prevention Speaker, and the Fall 2011 Spirituality Resource Fair. Also, the "These Hands for not for Hurting" program will be expanded next year and be put in the residence halls.
- Kathy Lake indicated the Communication Center will be more of a tele-counseling and social media center, and will work on outbound calling projects and a Facebook page with students help.
- Paul Sullivan of the Birkam Health Center serves on a Student Health Insurance Subcommittee through Midwestern Higher Education Compact where colleges and universities in a 12-state area contract with a health insurance company to save money.
- Troy Tissue noted that Ferris has partnered with the U.S. Marines in developing an accelerated admissions program.
- Chris Richmond said the computer-based assessment tool used in the Counseling Center gives counselors valuable feedback and allows for warning signs to be dealt with proactively.
- Kristen Norton indicated that the website for Student Conduct was redesigned and the database upgraded, allowing for more efficient operation.
- Alli Witucki noted that Student Leadership and Activities implemented OrgSync last fall and now has 9,219 users and 300-400 faculty and staff.

- Kristen Salomonson reported the Registrar's office implemented an electronic submission work flow change for grade changes.
- Mitzi Day spoke about enhancements to the Ferris Fact Book, including breaking out student credit hours for the colleges.
- Carla Erlewine reported that 18,210 FAFSA applications have been reviewed for the 2011-2012 year, 1,244 more than last year including 726 more freshmen.
- Charlotte Tetsworth said that Admissions received its first electronic transcript from a community college.

A complete listing of your successes shared during these meetings is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/sharesuccess2011.htm>

Close of Academic Year

With the close of the academic year, I want to thank you for your efforts to make a positive difference in the lives of our students. Despite some very real challenges, your dedication has helped Ferris remain a strong and growing university that truly cares about students. Our strength is in our people and the committed community we form together.

As summer approaches, I hope you will find time for yourself, family and friends to rest and recharge in the coming months. If you will be away from the university for summer, we look forward to welcoming you back in August for the 2011-12 academic year. As the highlights from the "Share Your Success" sessions make clear, great things are taking place at Ferris and I am very excited about our future. Thank you for helping to inspire our students to realize the full potential of a Ferris education.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President