

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
August 31, 2009

Welcome Back to Campus

Over the past week it has been easy to feel the spirit of excitement, enthusiasm and hope as students returned to our campus. These feelings are infectious. There are many efforts to help students and their families. Some of these include -

- Preparation and organization by residence hall staff for move-in
- Special efforts by campus security with traffic
- Bulldogs in Action students helping with the heavy lifting of move-in
- First Impressions volunteers across campus helping answer questions
- Orientation efforts by Admissions and the Office of Multicultural Student Services
- The many activities of Bulldog Beginnings

Beyond these activities faculty and counselors are helping students ready themselves for today's start of classes. Grounds crew and physical plant staff have put finishing touches on campus infrastructure, renovation projects, classrooms and residence halls. Dining service workers have served a rush of people attracted to the beautiful, renovated Rock Cafe. Business office staff are processing payments. IT staff are helping students connect on-line, and also dealing with the challenge this creates for our systems. There are many, many more examples.

Everywhere, your efforts to help students and their families are evident. In addition to academic programs and classroom resources, one of our great strengths is the sense of community we offer. Wherever you work I want you to know how much I appreciate your efforts in helping students feel at home at Ferris. From the very beginning, personal attention has been at the core of the experience we offer students. Thank you for making sure students feel that attention even before they set foot in the classroom.

History Events

This week is the kickoff for our 125th anniversary celebration. Much more than most universities, our history at Ferris is a vibrant part of our University - past, present and future. The vision established by our founders continues to guide our mission today.

With that in mind, please accept this invitation to be a part of a very special week of activities for our University. As many of you know, Woodbridge and Helen Ferris began the Big Rapids Industrial School on September 1st, 1884. 125 years later we'll mark this day with many events, including -

- Release of Ferris State University: The First 125 Years, a coffee table book filled with pictures and stories about our University and its development
- Start of the Ferris Trivia Contest
- A commemorative wreath laying at the Ferris tomb in Highland View Cemetery at 4 p.m. Earlier in the day the wreath will be on display in the Quad.

Founders' Day follows on Thursday, Sept. 3, also with a full schedule of special events -

- 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., a special post office cancellation event in the Quad
- 11:30 a.m., annual Faculty and Staff Welcome Back Picnic in the Quad
- 1:30 p.m., panel discussion on Ferris History with Ray Dickinson, Melinda Isler, Bob Leach, Larry Martin and Richard Santer in the Dome Room
- 3 p.m. - 7 p.m. , Ice Cream Social and family Founders' Days events in the Quad
- 6 p.m., "Unsolved History: The Burning of Old Main," including firsthand account by Robert Andrews, a student at that time who was injured in the fire, and others present at the fire, in Williams Auditorium

The History Task Force has done a remarkable job of putting together a whole series of history-themed events. The entire schedule is available at www.ferris.edu/125. My thanks to the members of the History Task Force for their efforts in preserving and celebrating University history: Harry Dempsey, Mark Eichenberg, Kimberly Erickson, Mary Gallagher-Eustice, Gary Huey, Melinda Isler, Geri Johnson, Beth Krueger, Larry Martin, Barry Mehler, Leah Nixon, Miles Postema, Karen Simmon, Patricia Terryn and JennifeThede.

Leadership Appointments

Two Ferris staff members have accepted important responsibilities within the University: Dr. Michael Cron is the new Dean of the Michigan College of Optometry, and Leah Monger has agreed to continue as interim dean of the Ferris Library for Information, Technology and Education.

Dr. Cron has more than three decades of experience at the MCO, where he has previously been chief of Pediatric Optometry Services, interim director of the Campus Clinic and associate dean. Dr. Cron is also actively involved in the West Michigan Optometric Association, Michigan Optometric Association, American Optometric Association, and other professional groups. He takes leadership of the MCO at an exciting time as we prepare to begin construction on a new building to further advance both the college's academic mission and community outreach.

I want to thank the excellent work of the search committee for this position, which was chaired by Dr. Roger Kamen.

Before assuming the FLITE dean's position, Leah Monger served as department head for library systems and operations. Additionally, Leah has served on various library and University committees. She also is working with a team to formulate emergency response procedures and a disaster recovery plan for the library. With more than 10 years experience at Ferris, Leah brings important continuity to this position.

Closing Thoughts

Congratulations to the football team and Coach Jeff Pierce for a convincing season opening victory over Tiffin University on Saturday. It was great to see so many fans including the University Pep Band out on an inclement, cool evening.

There are two individual commitment opportunities that accompany the 125th Anniversary. The first is 125 Hours for 125 Years, a service challenge based on the belief of our founders, that our actions can make the world better. More information on this project is

available at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/news/fyi-detail.cfm?ID=976> .

The second is the Opportunity @ 125 effort to raise scholarship funds for students in financial need. Additional information is here -

<http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/news/detail.cfm?ID=805> .

There is an excitement, enthusiasm, and good feeling that accompanies the start of the school year. I look forward to working and celebrating with you.

Best wishes,

David L. Eisler
President