

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 4, 2013

Ferris Foundation Benefit

Last Friday evening's 15th annual Ferris Foundation Benefit for Excellence was a very special evening. I want to thank everyone who worked so very hard to make this evening such a success. The event is sponsored by the Ferris Foundation Board of Directors, a group of twenty-six supporters of the University, whose work is dedicated to creating philanthropic support for students, faculty, staff, and programs at our University. Together this group has individually pledged more than \$4.25 million to our University and its people. Assisting and supporting the Foundation Board are members of University Advancement and Marketing who organized the evening, and our title sponsor Wolverine Power Marketing Cooperative.

The theme for the benefit was, "Given the Opportunity, What Would You Do?" The evening focused on the work the Foundation does in assisting our people at Ferris State University. More than five hundred students receive scholarships from funds managed by the Foundation. One of these programs is the Ferris Foundation Opportunity Scholarships and the students who received scholarships were highlighted. A video featuring Kendall Art and Education major Megan Armstrong illustrated the depth of commitment our students have. Despite being self-sufficient and having to rely on her own finances to pursue her passion, Megan is making the most of her opportunities to introduce the transformative power of art to under-resourced schools.

Another important program of the Foundation is the Ferris Exceptional Merit Grants for Faculty and Staff. The work of some past recipients was highlighted, featuring David Pilgrim and Carrie Weiss, who helped create the Jim Crow Museum travelling exhibits; Paul Klatt, who created the Osprey Cam project; and Greg Gogolin, whose efforts helped establish the Information Security and Intelligence degree. Each of the current Merit Grant recipients - Mike Berghoeff, Tara Braun, David McClendon, Arinze Nkemdirim-Okere, Avesh Raghunandan, and Dean Luplow - were also recognized. Biology professor Brad Isler and his Exceptional Merit Grant project working with high school students in a biotechnology camp was highlighted in a video presentation. His efforts introducing these students to scientific research are remarkable. The video presentations of Megan and Dr. Isler are accessible on-line at <http://youtu.be/RGyT57-USOE> and <http://youtu.be/daUYeQmcvii> .

Special guest John Quinones shared his extraordinary story of growing up in poverty in San Antonio and starting school as a young man who spoke no English with a teacher who spoke no Spanish. As a youth his father lost his job and they became migrant farm workers. His memory of Michigan consists of travelling here to pick fruit and vegetables, earning 35 cents for each bushel of tomatoes. His father encouraged him to go school. Throughout the adversity he faced on this journey, he benefitted from people encouraging him to pursue his dreams and use his special gifts to become a journalist. Much of his Emmy-award winning career has focused on the plight of those neglected, ignored and disregarded by our society. In addition to his work for ABC on "20/20" and "Prime Time Live," he has a show entitled, "What Would You Do?" which

highlights, through hidden camera work, how people deal with ethical challenges when confronted by them in everyday life. Many of these focus on face-to-face situations with those who are less fortunate. He concluded his presentation by showing a segment from one of his shows in which actors posing as a homeless man and a bartender created a situation where the bartender turned the homeless person away from a meal and took his money. In this situation some people showed true caring and kindness, while others belittled and encouraged the homeless man to leave. John Quinones' extraordinary presentation made a lasting impression, indeed, Given the Opportunity, What Would You Do?

Our Ferris Foundation for Excellence Benefit continues to grow in size, stature and the amount of funds it raises for our University. Over the years it has outgrown the ballrooms at both the Amway Grand and the JW Marriott, and the Steelcase Ballrooms at DeVos Place proved a superb environment. This evening requires extraordinary effort from many people who work and support our University, and I am very grateful for their efforts. Thanks to the support of the university's friends, alumni, faculty, staff and students, the Foundation raised more than \$94,000 last Friday to support the Opportunity Scholarship Program and Exceptional Merit Grant awards for faculty and staff.

If you could not attend this year's benefit I encourage you to attend next year. To support the work of the foundation with our students, faculty, staff, and programs, visit <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/foundation/> .

Kendall College of Art and Design Events

Pamella Roland DeVos - On Tuesday, Oct. 29, the Kendall College of Art and Design dedicated its new Pamella Roland DeVos Fashion Studies program. The program is named for Pamella Roland DeVos, a Grand Rapids native and president/designer of New York City-based Pamella Roland, an international fashion company. The naming is in honor of a generous \$1 million gift from the Dan and Pamella DeVos Foundation, a donation that will help raise the program's profile around the country, as well as to allow for equipment purchases, and the facilitation of projects with designers and retailers.

The dedication ceremony, which took place at the Woodbridge N. Ferris building in Grand Rapids, included a press conference with Pamella DeVos and one of her designers, as well as the unveiling of a naming plaque. Thanks to her gift, the program will be housed in the historic building. In addition to the material support the gift provides, DeVos' involvement provides for important networking possibilities. Already the program has established a partnership with NYC's prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology that will allow KCAD fashion students to spend one year of their college career studying at FIT.

Pulso - The next evening Kendall opened its art exhibition Pulso, featuring the work of 28 artists with ties to Latin America and its culture. Running through December 4th, the exhibition highlights the extraordinary possibilities that exist thanks to KCAD's merger with the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art. The artists' work is being exhibited both at the UICA and at the main Kendall building.

As described on the Kendall web site, Pulso includes exhibitions in the Ferris Building and the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, and is rooted in an exploration of the ways in which regional boundaries affect the perception of Art. This collaborative exhibition allows the diversity

of medium and subject to challenge cultural preconceptions of contemporary art. In doing so, it strengthens dialogue among artists, both locally and globally.

The exhibition complements our exploration of new ways to connect with and serve the needs of the Hispanic community in West Michigan. For Pulso, Kendall's new Community Arts Advocate, Salvador Jiménez – who also has work in the exhibition – travelled to Big Rapids to give a talk to the Center for Latin@ Studies about Pulso. Students then traveled to experience the exhibition in person.

Pulso is a wide-ranging and vibrant show involving multimedia, artist talks and more. For more information about Pulso, including links to the work of the artists, visit <http://www.kcad.edu/news/Pulso-transcends-gallery/>.

Big Rapids Events

Native American Month – This month our University is hosting a series of free events to honor the history, culture and tradition of Native Americans. Co-sponsored by the Circle of Tribal Nations and FSUBuntu registered student organizations, Ferris' Office of International Education, and the FSU Symphony Band and the Office of Instrumental Concert Ensembles, these events include -

- “Our Fires Still Burn” documentary screening and Q&A session, 5-7:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 4, College of Business, Room 111.
- Ferris Symphony Band Fall Concert, featuring “The Fairy Ring” from Two Native Legends by composer Max Williams, 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7, Williams Auditorium
- We Are One – One World Futbol Kickoff, fundraising event for the One World Futbol Project at Ferris, 1-6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 9, Wink Arena, Multipurpose Room.
- “What is it to be a Warrior” with Vietnam veteran and educator Steven Naganashe Perry, 11 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 14, IRC, Room 120.
- “The Real Thanksgiving” with Martin Reinhardt, Anishanaabe Ojibway citizen of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and an assistant professor of Native American Studies at Northern Michigan University, 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 26, College of Business, Room 111/IRC Connector.

For more information, visit

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2013/october/native.htm> or <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/studentlife/Minority/NAHM2013.pdf>.

Festival of Nations – The first Festival of Nations has been a remarkable series of events helping build, among many things, stronger connections between International Students and local businesses. The Festival concludes this week with three final events, including the International Music Festival and Closing Reception this Friday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m. at Artworks. Musical presentations include the Celtic group Balefire and talented students from Saudi Arabia, China and the United States. The international calligraphy group, Pen Dragon, will be creating original calligraphy pieces throughout the evening.

Veterans Day – In honor of Veterans Day, Ferris' West Central Concert Band will perform a Veterans Day Band Concert on Sunday, Nov. 10, 4 p.m. at Williams Auditorium. The Ferris Military Support Group will be collecting donations of packaged, non-perishable food items, as well as such items as toiletries and socks, for active military troops. Special guests include the

Croton American Legion Post No. 381 Honor Guard and the Ferris Veterans Association. This event is free to the public.

On Veterans Day, Monday, Nov. 11, we will host our annual Veterans Breakfast in the Granger Building, Room 144, beginning at 8 a.m. Jim Lindsey, local veteran and faculty emeritus, will be speaking. All current military personnel and service veterans are invited to join us for a free breakfast as we express our thanks to them for their service.

Athletics

It was a busy and successful weekend for our student athletes. The football team defeated Wayne State University in an impressive home victory, 41-10. The ice hockey team won both away games against conference rival University of Alabama, Huntsville 5-0 and 3-2. Although early in the season our team is ranked 8th in the nation on the Men's Ratings Percentage Index. Our nationally ranked volleyball team defeated Michigan Tech Friday, but lost to Northern Michigan on Saturday. The soccer team completed a very successful regular season by shutting out Lake Erie College 2-0. They finished the regular season with a winning record of 9-7-1 overall and 7-4-1 in GLIAC.

On Friday, Nov. 8, our ice hockey team will play its first home games in the Western Collegiate Hockey Association, with two games against Bemidji State in the Ewigleben Ice Arena this Friday and Saturday. The puck drops both evenings at 7:07 p.m. The volleyball team also has two home contests this week, facing Lake Superior State Friday at noon and Saginaw Valley Saturday afternoon at 3. I encourage you to support all of our student-athletes.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president