

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
October 6, 2014

Homecoming

It is difficult to imagine a more exciting homecoming than these past few days. Despite some raindrops and a considerable temperature change, this was a memorable weekend to welcome our alumni back to campus.

Some of the most engaging activities during the weekend were provided by our athletic teams. Our women's volleyball team kicked off an amazing 24-hour period for our student-athletes, defeating Ashland University Friday evening and Lake Erie Saturday morning, both by scores of 3-0.

Saturday afternoon our football team returned the second half kickoff for a touchdown and also returned an interception 90 yards during a powerful second half to defeat Findlay 49-21. Our team remains unbeaten at 5-0 overall and 4-0 in the GLIAC.

Our ice hockey team continued the excitement. Saturday evening the atmosphere was electric with a packed house of more than 2,500 people inside Ewingleben Ice Arena. Ferris jumped on top of Michigan 2-0 in the first minute of the game and then held on to earn a hard-fought 4-3 victory. Our winning goal was scored shorthanded, and for the game's final minute we were one person short due to penalty. When Michigan pulled their goalie, this gave them a two-person attacking advantage. It was wonderful to see so many students at the game cheering on our team.

Woven throughout Saturday were Homecoming events that brought together our alumni, campus and local community. After the traditional parade with Grand Marshals Ron and Dee Snead, parking lots were packed for tailgating events. It was good to see the number of colleges that have engaged with this celebration by sponsoring alumni events. The Tailgate on Ice between the football and hockey games was especially well attended. Planners and volunteers for Homecoming did an absolutely superb job.

Congratulations are due to our student-athletes, coaches and fans for an extraordinary weekend. Given the high level of talent we have among our student-athletes and their collective success this season, the excitement about the Homecoming weekend football, volleyball and hockey games was palpable.

Next weekend our football and ice hockey teams will again be in action at home - ice hockey facing off against Wilfred Laurier Friday evening, and the football team taking on Tiffin Saturday afternoon. I hope you will come out and support our Bulldogs. Full coverage of last weekend's events along with next weekend's schedule is available at <http://www.ferrisstatebulldogs.com>.

ArtPrize

The importance of Kendall College of Art and Design to ArtPrize, the phenomenally successful celebration of public art in Grand Rapids, is very evident in nominations for the top awards, as well as the extensive media coverage. All three of the sites associated with KCAD are on the juried shortlist for Outstanding Venue - the Woodbridge N. Ferris Building, the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, and SiTE:LAB@ The Morton, curated by faculty member Paul

Amenta. Thursday's *Grand Rapids Press* featured a front page picture of Steve Lambert's "Capitalism Works for Me," which is in Kendall's Ferris Building exhibition.

Eight of the 20 juried finalists in four different categories – 2-D Art Form, 3-D Art Form, Time-Based Works and Installation Works – are hosted by Kendall, the UICA or SiTE:LAB. Winners will be announced on Friday night, Oct. 10, in the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. A full list of the juried finalists is available at http://www.mlive.com/artprize/index.ssf/2014/09/see_the_artprize_2014_jurors_shortlist_top_25.html. This success and recognition attests to the quality of art and design that Kendall, and its faculty, students and alumni produce and influence. Clearly, ArtPrize would not be the same without these resources and expertise.

The involvement of Kendall faculty extends to the broader community as well. Maranda at WOTV did a wonderful story about Art Education professors Donna St. John and Wendy McLenithan, who worked with high school students from Forest Hills Northern and Forest Hills Transition Center to create an installation entitled, "Don't Look Down on Anyone." Composed of self-portraits by students who are physically, cognitively or emotionally impaired, this work challenges viewers to literally "look up" to these students, whose portraits are installed on the ceiling in the KCAD exhibition area. Together with colleagues they also have a diversity-related art curriculum for younger, K-5 students. You can view the WOTV report at <http://wotv4women.com/2014/09/30/project-connects-students-through-artprize/>. There is also a very good story on the Kendall website about both curricula at <http://www.kcad.edu/news/helping-k-12-students-see-the-value-of-creativity-individuality-and-diversity-at-artprize-2014/>.

A number of people reminded me last week of the KCAD website listing of Kendall artists exhibiting at ArtPrize. That listing is at <http://www.kcad.edu/artprize/participants/>.

If you have not yet visited ArtPrize, which runs through Oct. 12, I urge you to do so. If you'd like to get personally engaged in ArtPrize, Kendall could still use a few more volunteers as ArtPrize enters its final days.

This is a truly a unique, stimulating and inspiring event.

United Way Campaign

Volunteers from across the university are soliciting your contributions for Ferris' United Way campaign. The United Way's support of those in need in Mecosta and Osceola counties is critical. Through area agencies, the United Way helps deliver food, shelter, medicine, skills training and many other services. In our area, your contribution will help the United Way support the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, Project Starburst, W.I.S.E., and many other groups that people in emergency situations turn to for help.

This year our Big Rapids campus campaign is co-chaired by Jeanine Ward-Roof and Linda Telfer, assisted by Faculty Ambassador Dan Tuuri and Staff Ambassador Jeremy Mishler. Volunteers from throughout the university along with our students are hard at work helping our campus meet its \$60,000 goal. When you receive a pledge card, please take a moment to generously help others.

We have a very strong and positive relationship with our surrounding communities. This is an opportunity for all of us to contribute to an organization that helps people throughout Mecosta and Osceola counties, as well as on campus. We have only to think about the flooding that took place last year to remind ourselves of the kind of situations during which our community turns to United Way-supported agencies for assistance. On behalf of the many hundreds, if not

thousands, of people who will be helped by your contributions, please accept a most heart-felt “Thank You!”

Disability Awareness Month

October is Disability Awareness Month which focuses public attention on issues related to individuals with learning disabilities. The Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services Office has planned a series of events as part of Disability Awareness Month. Friday evening, Oct. 10, they will host an exhibition in Wink Arena at 7:30 p.m. The Grand Rapids Pacers Wheelchair Basketball team will play members of our men’s and women’s basketball team, as well as other participating students. Next Wednesday, Oct. 15, they will host speaker Bill Deering in IRC 120 at 6 p.m. He will speak candidly about his stuttering and his process of self-discovery and acceptance.

Other Disability Awareness Month events include:

- Thursday, Oct. 9 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Diversity of Abilities Panel Discussion, IRC 120
- Thursday, Oct. 30 11 a.m. - Working with Students with Disabilities Presentation for Faculty, FLITE, Room 133

More event information is available here -

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2014/october/disabilities.htm> I encourage you to attend and support these learning opportunities.

Strategic Planning and Resource Council

Next Tuesday, Oct. 14, the Strategic Planning and Resource Council will meet at 3 p.m. in MCO 211. Discussions will focus on student debt and higher education affordability. This is an issue that is of special importance to Ferris and our students. We cannot provide access to the “Opportunity” that is one of our core values, if our students cannot afford to attend our university. Thanks to the work of many people throughout the university, we have made much progress in slowing the growth of student debt. However, much more work remains. I want us to be a university that not just slows student debt, but reduces it. This is a meaningful and achievable goal, one of critical importance for our students not just today, but in the future.

SPARC meetings are always open to the public. I encourage you to attend and look forward to planning together how we can move forward on this critical topic. Please contribute your insights as we continue to identify and implement the best ways to reduce debt for our Ferris students.

David L. Eisler, president