

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
September 15, 2014

## **U.S. News and World Report Ranking**

The latest *U.S. News and World Report* “Best Colleges” rankings are out and Ferris State University continues to rise in this comparison. The 2015 listing places Ferris 13<sup>th</sup> among the top regional public universities in the Midwest. This is up three positions from our 16<sup>th</sup> place ranking last year, and up 14 spots from our 27<sup>th</sup> spot two years ago.

Our continued rise in the rankings shows a positive recognition of the quality of the career-oriented education we provide. I believe this is driven by our mission and vision, and the high-quality support we provide our students. Certainly, when we adopted a new strategic plan this past year, every item on the plan was crafted specifically to meet the needs of our students. I am confident this student-centered focus, our leadership in career-oriented education, your excellence in the classroom and on our campuses, and our investment in academic resources will continue to advance the public perception of our University.

In sharing this news, I must confess that I have not been an advocate of such rankings in higher education. Certainly any comparison is a difficult task, but this approach ignores some of what I believe are especially important factors. For me, it is not the preparation of the entering class of students or the selectivity of the institution, but rather the educational growth of students while they attend an institution that is of primary importance. Admittedly, these rankings are an imperfect measure, but they do help validate the increased public appreciation for your success. Thank you for your continued efforts with our students, which makes this recognition possible.

## **Kendall College of Art and Design President Search**

The search for the next president of Kendall College of Art and Design is moving forward with the naming of a search committee. Over the past few weeks I have worked with Kendall Academic Dean Ron Riksen and Art Education Program Chair Cindy Todd, who have sought volunteers for the search committee. They have developed a committee broadly representative of Kendall College of Art and Design, and which also recognizes Kendall’s important engagement in Grand Rapids.

I want to thank the following individuals for accepting the invitation to serve on this very important search committee:

Mary Bradshaw, Administrative Assistant, Administration and Finance

Elise Brown, Instruction/Reference Librarian

Lee Davis, Associate Professor of Interior Design

Adam DeKraker, Professor of Photography

Suzanne Eberle, Professor of Art History

Dirk Hoffius, Partner, Varnum LLP, Kendall trustee emeritus

Kris Jones, Kendall student

James Laubach, Kendall student

Jon Moroney, Assistant Professor of Industrial Design, Director of Talent Acquisition and Recruitment

Phil Renato, Professor of Metals Jewelry Design  
Ron Riksen, Professor of Graphic Design, Academic Dean  
Valerie Schmieder, Principal, Via Design, Kendall alumna  
Jill Schneider, Assistant to the President, Director of Alumni Relations  
Samantha Schultz, Registrar  
Cindy Todd, Associate Professor of Art Education  
Mariel Versluis, Professor of Printmaking.  
Jason Zylstra, Director, Foundation Administration, RDV Corporation.

Support for the committee will be provided by Kim Sapkowski, Administrative Assistant to the Dean of the College.

Previously the title for this position title was President of Kendall College of Art and Design and Vice Chancellor, Ferris State University. This has seemed an anomaly as there is not a chancellor at Ferris. To better align the position with the administrative structure of the university, the position will be titled, "President of Kendall College of Art and Design, and Vice President, Ferris State University."

It is anticipated that finalists for this position will interview for several days on the Kendall campus in February, 2015. I invite your input and participation in this very important search.

### **Presentation Tonight - "Social Media, Bullying, Alcohol, Drugs and Other Risks for Students"**

Janet Judge, a nationally-recognized expert in the area of Title IX compliance, will be speaking tonight on "Social Media, Bullying, Alcohol, Drugs and Other Risks for Students," from 5-6 p.m. in Williams Auditorium. This is a wide-ranging session touching upon many issues of concern to our university and which should be of interest to the entire Ferris community.

Ms. Judge is a graduate of Harvard/Radcliffe College where she served as assistant director of athletics, alumni relations office liaison, vice-chair of its athletics oversight committee, and a member of its NCAA Division I Athletics Certification Steering Committee. As an undergraduate, she was an eight-time NCAA Division I varsity letter-winner in soccer, basketball and track & field. Judge is co-author of the recently released NCAA manual on Title IX. Currently she serves as president of Sports Law Associates LLC.

Tomorrow, Sept. 16, Ms. Judge will give three presentations. From 8:30-10 a.m. in the West Campus Community Center, she will present an update on Title IX and legal/risk issues involving athletics. From 11 a.m.-Noon in MCO 210 she will give an update on Title IX and other federal regulations. In this she will give particular attention to how Title IX is being used to address sexual violence on college campuses. Finally, from 1-3:50 p.m. in MCO 212, Judge will speak on "Implementing and Enforcing Title IX at Ferris State University."

Her presentations are sponsored by the Offices of the General Counsel, Human Resources, and Risk Management. This event is also sponsored by the Michigan Universities Self-Insurance Corporation.

These are important and timely topics for our students, our University and you. I encourage you to attend one or more of these sessions. For more information, contact Chris Weber, manager of Risk Management and Insurance, at extension 3848.

## **State History Conference**

On Friday, Sept. 26 and Saturday, Sept. 27, the Historical Society of Michigan's 140<sup>th</sup> annual meeting and state history conference will take place in Big Rapids. The conference planning committee for this event includes co-chairs Mary Kay MacIver, associate director of advancement services and technology, and Richard Santer, professor emeritus of Geography. Also on the planning committee are Shelly Armstrong, vice president of university advancement and marketing, and Melinda Isler, university archivist. This conference features sessions about both Ferris State University and the City of Big Rapids. For those interested in this area's history or history in general the conference should be of significant interest.

The conference includes a number of Ferris presenters. David Pilgrim provides the keynote speech Friday evening, speaking on the Jim Crow Museum. Melinda Isler leads a session entitled "Woodbridge Ferris: An Enduring Legacy"; Scott Herron, professor of biology and biology education program coordinator, presents "Exploring the Imprint of Native American on Michigan Names, Landmarks and History"; and Doug Haneline, professor emeritus of English, leads "Teaching a Tombstone to Talk." The complete program is quite interesting, including sessions on the African-American communities of Mecosta-Remus and Idlewild, suffragist Anna Howard Shaw and conservative thinker Russell Kirk, among others.

Bringing this conference to Big Rapids has been a particular passion for professor emeritus Richard Santer, who for many years has championed the history of Ferris and the State of Michigan. His involvement, along with that of Doug Haneline, highlights the many contributions our emeriti faculty members continue to make to our university and the Big Rapids community.

There are fees for the conference and the Friday events. The program brochure is accessible on line at <http://www.hsmichigan.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/State-History-Conference-flyer.pdf>

## **ArtPrize Volunteers Needed**

Grand Rapids' hugely successful ArtPrize competition is fast approaching. Kendall College of Art and Design is seeking volunteers to staff its exhibition, "IAM: Money Matters," in the Woodbridge N. Ferris building, which begins Wednesday, Sept. 24 and runs through Sunday, Oct. 12. Kendall is looking for volunteers to contribute a total of 2,500 hours to make its bold exhibition about money and consumption a success. Volunteers are needed to serve in registration, exhibition and as greeters.

Volunteers need to attend a training session this Thursday, Sept. 18, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. You can sign up and choose one or more shifts by going to <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040944aca72da46-artprize2>. After signing up, you will receive e-mails about your shift and where to check in.

Kendall College of Art and Design plays an integral part in the success of ArtPrize. Last year KCAD was named "Best Venue," for its exhibition at the Woodbridge N. Ferris building. Saturday evening I attended the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art's "Odd Ball" and viewed their ArtPrize exhibition, some of which is still in preparation. This is a stunning exhibit with a wide-ranging group of engaging entries, including art partially created by bees, a mechanical pony, music, karaoke, and stunning visual effects. A number of Kendall faculty and staff are actively engaged in ArtPrize throughout the city, including the pocket park between the Kendall and Ferris Buildings and SiTE:Lab, this year at the Morton House.

More information about KCAD and the many ArtPrize events at the Kendall Exhibition Center in the Ferris Building is available at [www.kcad.edu/artprize](http://www.kcad.edu/artprize) . More information about ArtPrize generally is available at [www.artprize.org](http://www.artprize.org) .

### **Athletics**

Our athletic teams are off to a wonderful start to their fall seasons, with three squads nationally ranked. Our women's tennis team is 4-0 with victories over Lake Superior, Michigan Tech, Aquinas and Saginaw Valley. The men's tennis team took all 12 doubles matches and 21 of 22 singles matches at their Bulldog Invitational this weekend. Our women's volleyball team is ranked 15th in the nation and undefeated in the GLIAC with 3-0 victories over Saginaw and Wayne. The men's cross country team is also ranked at 20<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

Our football team is ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the nation and also undefeated after a 27-7 victory over Northwood on the road last weekend. The football home opener is this Saturday at 7 p.m. against traditional rival Grand Valley. For this contest, known as the Anchor Bone Classic, we look forward to a great crowd and support for our team.