

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 13, 2015

This was a marvelous weekend for Ferris State University with much evidence of our engagement on campus and in the community. Friday evening's well attended opening of DisArt and the Art of the Lived Experiment at the UICA, GRAM, and KCAD was a triumph for the many people involved in creating this landmark event. Festival events continued throughout the weekend. Also in Grand Rapids our chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, the national honorary band fraternity, hosted one of their most successful regional conferences in their history with over 600 attending. Sunday afternoon's International Festival of Cultures in Big Rapids packed the University Center for an afternoon of food and celebration of the growing international efforts at Ferris.

This engagement continues this weekend when our students sponsor the Big Event, the largest student-organized community service project in the state. Saturday morning our students will gather on Top Taggart Field before heading out into the community to do spring yard cleanup and minor household repairs. It is wonderful to see these many successful engagement efforts. I want to thank everyone who takes time to reach out and make our communities a better place.

Money Smart Week

One of our strategies to help lower student loan debt is to promote financial literacy. As part of that effort, Ferris will take part in Money Smart week, which is a national awareness campaign designed to help consumers better manage their personal finances. Although some programming is geared specifically to students, most Money Smart Week events are open to the public. Even those not directly concerned with attending school can be especially helpful to students. Sessions on how much buying a house costs, for example, makes student re-evaluate their spending priorities.

The program most designed for students is called "Get Real!" which gives participants a "real life" financial experience. Students choose an occupation, and then play games regarding marital status, number of children, buying a house, a car, insurance, etc. This lets students experience the need to budget and think long-term. "Get Real!" takes place this week Wednesday, April 15, 3-8 p.m. in UC 202. More information and a link to registration for students is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/admission/financialaid/getreal.htm>.

Other events are "Your Money - Good Advice!" on Monday, April 20, "Buying a House - The American Dream" on Tuesday, April 21, "Loan Repayment: Steps for Success" on Wednesday, April 22, "Auto Finance 101" on Thursday, April 23, and "Foundations of Investing" on Friday, April 24. Sessions take place at 11 a.m. and are repeated at 7 p.m. in FLITE 240 Reading Room. We will be awarding \$1,250 in scholarships during Money Smart Week as incentives for students to take part.

FLITE Librarian David Scott has created a library guide to Money Smart Week events that contains more information about these events. This is available at <http://ferris.libguides.com/MoneySmartWeek>. If you know of students who would benefit from

“Get Real!” and other Money Smart Week events, please encourage them to register and attend. I also hope you may find these events of interest. Sessions have been scheduled so as to make them accessible to people with a range of schedules.

SPARC

The Strategic Planning and Resource Council will meet this Tuesday, April 14, in the University Center Room 202A at 3 p.m. Chair Spence Tower will lead the group in a discussion of university core values, and vice presidents will present divisional strategic plans. SPARC is open to all members of the university community and you are encouraged to attend.

Good News

As the academic year begins to draw to a close, faculty, staff and students are very busy with projects and activities that are garnering attention and awards. There is much to share, and many more examples of exceptional effort and achievement than can be included here. The full list as well as an archive of past months' listings is available at

<http://www.ferris.edu/president/goodnews/homepage.htm> . Please take a moment to review the very many positive things taking place at your university.

- Law Enforcement Academy students participated in the Michigan Special Olympics Polar Plunge raising \$5,800. Previously, they raised \$1,200 for MSO in the Law Enforcement Torch Run. MSO recognized the students as the state's top fundraising police academy.
- Vanessa Wyss presented “Preparing Pre-Service Teachers for Professionalism: The Impact of a PDS Effort on Various Pre-service Teacher Groups,” at the National Association of Professional Development Schools in Atlanta.
- Virginia Hines presented “The Perfect Storm: Teacher Expectations, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, and the School to Prison Pipeline” at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association.
- Joshua Camiller received the George C. Marshall ROTC Award, given to cadets who demonstrate excellence in leadership, academics, performance and extracurricular activities. He is one of 272 recipients nationally to receive this award in 2015.
- Heavy Equipment student Paul Laskowski was recently awarded the DaSilva Award from the National Association of Fleet Administrators Educational Foundation.
- The College of Engineering Technology has been named winner of a 2015 Michigan Works! Association Prosperity Award, recognizing their partnership with Michigan Works! and Reed City Tool, resulting in new job creation and significant local impact.
- Darlene Kaczmarczyk, students Amanda Opolski, Jerydd Sprague, Lydia Boda, Molly Duff, Sarah Lewis, and alumni Jessica Shelton, Kayla Thompson, and Trevor Rowely were awarded scholarships to take courses at the Ox-Bow School of Art this summer. Also, Kaczmarczyk was a featured speaker at the Society for Photographic Education's national conference.
- Dustin Rogers won Ferris' 2015 MFA Student Purchase Award for his piece “Plane to Sea, Plain to See.”
- 16 KCAD students won awards at the 2015 West Michigan ADDY Awards, including Deanna Lucas, who received a Gold ADDY and the Best of Show award for her non-traditional campaign “This is Me.”

- MFA painting student Ricardo Gonzalez has curated “Borderline,” an exhibition at Grand Valley featuring thirteen Latino artists.
- Dr. Anuli Njoku was selected to attend the 6th annual Health Equity Leadership Institute, focused on increasing the number of researchers, particularly minority investigators, engaged in health disparities/health equity research.
- Admissions hosted 542 guests (206 students) at the Admitted Student Open House in March, an increase of 86 students and 198 more total guests.
- The Offices of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the Admissions, with the help of volunteers from across campus, Ferris Statewide and Kendall School of Art & Design, hosted nearly 1,100 local high school students for Get Real! on March 19th.
- The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid sent award letters to over 3,800 new freshmen and transfer students on Friday, March 13, the earliest in recent history.
- Jody Greco attended the rollout of Mrs. Rick Snyder’s new initiative to “End Campus Sexual Assault.” Mrs. Snyder is convening a summit in early June to work on this effort and has invited Michigan universities to participate.
- Seventeen hockey student-athletes received WCHA All-Academic Team honors.
- Seven student-athletes participated in the Champions of Character College All-Star Basketball Game, the most combined selections of any school. Andy Bronkema served as a co-head coach.
- The Ferris Foundation endowment investment returns of 17.1% for fiscal year 2014 outperformed national averages for other college and university endowments as reported in the recently released 2014 NACUBO Commonfund Study of Endowments. The Foundation’s three, five and 10-year averages also exceed national averages.
- The Ferris Alumni Association Board has approved four new board members: Judith Collins, historical architect and compliance coordinator of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore; Luke Edington, production sports engineer for Gentex; Susan Wyckoff McFarland, with the Social Security Administration in Sheridan; and Rick Rolf, with Thrivent Financial in Grand Rapids.
- The Student Alumni Gold Club’s Brutus Mascot Program received Outstanding Internal Program, CASE District 5 Affiliated Student Advancement Programs.
- The Alumni Association, Ferris Bookstore and Commencement Office hosted more than 850 graduating seniors during the spring Graduation Fair.
- Contributions to the Ferris Foundation are up 19% and the number of donors is up 14% compared to the same time last year.
- The UA&M Web team working with Academic Affairs has launched the new Course Catalog that is now live at www.ferris.edu/catalog .
- Long-distance swimmer, author and sports broadcaster Diana Nyad will be the keynote speaker for this fall’s Ferris Foundation Benefit. In 2013 at the age of 64, in her fifth and final attempt, she successfully fulfilled her lifelong dream of completing the 110-mile swim from Cuba to Florida.

Retirement Options Review

We are establishing a task force to review defined contribution and supplemental retirement options. The task force will provide crucial input into this process, with members

coming from various employee groups including represented employees, the Administrative Council and Kendall College of Art and Design. Their review will help make certain our plans are in compliance with state and federal and statutes, and meet the needs of those enrolled.

The task force will learn about our defined contribution retirement providers and the funds offered within those plans over the course of work with the consultant. They will review Ferris' plan fund options, associated fees and supplemental providers, working with a consultant over the next few months. The project scope includes:

- Fiduciary review of optional 403(b) regular and 403(b) and 457(b) supplemental retirement plans
- Review of vendor investment fee structures to make sure they are competitive
- Review of our plan documents for compliance
- Review of vendor options in the plans.

This effort is designed to ensure Ferris employees have the best options and pricing available for retirement planning. The review will *not* deal with asset allocations for individual employee retirement accounts. That is, and will remain, the responsibility of each employee.

This process is expected to get underway this late spring or early summer. Please contact Tamie Grunow, associate vice president of Human Resources, at grunowt@ferris.edu for additional information or with questions you may have about this review.

Athletics

The men's tennis team had a very special 6-3 victory over Northwood University on Thursday. Northwood had won 171 of their last 172 GLIAC regular season competitions. They followed that with an 8-1 victory over Wayne State on Sunday. With these victories our men continue to be undefeated in the GLIAC (7-0). With two victories next weekend they will clinch the GLIAC regular season championship, which Northwood has won for the past twenty years in a row. Congratulations and best wishes for continued success to Coach Chad Berryhill and the men's tennis team.

The men's and women's outdoor track team had an outstanding day at the Hillsdale Invitational on Saturday. Thirty-one Ferris athletes finished in the top ten of their event, with Samantha Johnson winning the 1500 meters and Briana Raaso winning the javelin. Congratulations to coach Jared Kelsh and these men's and women's student-athletes.

David L. Eisler, president