

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 27, 2015

Commencement Stories

Each year at commencement I share stories of our students' successes. Over the past few days I have had the honor to sit down with a few of our 2015 graduates to learn about their journeys in life and at our university. I came away from these interviews extraordinarily impressed. The students I visited with are intelligent, articulate and focused on their success. Among our graduates are students who are the first in their families to graduate from high school and are going on to graduate work, students who are excelling despite physical challenges, students from troubled families who are setting an example for their siblings, are students who have excelled at both academics and athletics, and students who have won major national grants and awards.

Every year I think that the stories I hear cannot get any more impressive, and each year I am newly amazed by the determination and resiliency of our students. As we draw closer to commencement, I hope you will take a moment to congratulate the graduating students you know. Every one of our students has a story about the path they travelled to graduation. Each deserves our recognition for their achievement during this important time of their lives. Thank you for helping to make commencement a special for our graduates.

Tenure, Promotion and Merit

Thursday afternoon is our annual Employee Service Awards Celebration. During this time of year when we celebrate our successes, I want to congratulate our faculty who have earned promotion, merit recognition and/or tenure this year. Every one of the students I talked with this past week wanted to thank one or more faculty members who had a profound impact on them. Going beyond instruction, these faculty members changed the course of students' lives by inspiring them or helping them discover their true passion.

The Services Awards are Thursday, April 30, from 3-5 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom 202. Please join me in congratulating our faculty who, along with our graduates, have achieved their own landmarks this year:

Tenure

Rosalie Baran, Pharmacy

Sandra Cook, Health Professions

Kristin Poleski, Education and Human Services

Daniel Pratt, Engineering Technology

Chrystal Roach, Education and Human Services

Kari Vavra, Pharmacy

Emily Zyla, Health Professions

Promotion to

Professor

Kimberly Beistle, *Health Professions*
Allison Bernknopf, *Pharmacy*
Tracey Boncher, *Pharmacy*
Christine Conley-Sowels, *Retention and Student Success*
Clay Dedeaux, *Business*
Patrick English, *Engineering Technology*
Jeffrey Hardesty, *Engineering Technology*
Joshua Lotoczky, *Optometry*
Hikaru Murata, *Education and Human Services*
Glen Okonoski, *Education and Human Services*
Dean Vanloo, *Pharmacy*
Christopher Westerkamp, *Arts and Sciences*
Mary Zimmer, *Arts and Sciences*

Associate Professor

Dawn Fox, *Arts and Science*
David McClendon, *Arts and Science*
Anne Ottney, *Pharmacy*
Victor Piercey, *Arts and Science*
Kristin Poleski, *Education and Human Services*
Chrystal Roach, *Education and Human Services*
Lisa Singleterry, *Health Professions*
Kari Vavra, *Pharmacy*
Janet Vizina Roubal, *Arts and Science*
Michelle Weemaes, *Health Professions*

Assistant Professor

Gerald Emerick, *Business*
Emily Zyla, *Health Professions*

Merit Awardees

Sandra Alspach, *Arts and Sciences*
Rosalie Baran, *Pharmacy*
Peter Balanda, *Arts and Sciences*
John Conati, *Business*
Adnan Dakkuri, *Pharmacy*
Pasquale Di Raddo, *Arts and Sciences*
Anita Fagerman, *Business*
Nancy Hogan, *Education and Human Services*
Hengli Jiao, *Arts and Sciences*
Liza Ing, *Education and Human Services*

Renee Koski, *Pharmacy*
Gary Maike, *Engineering Technology*
Barry Mehler, *Arts and Sciences*
David Murray *Engineering Technology*
Craig Straley, *Pharmacy*

The Big Event

My interviews with students this week highlighted yet again how much our students do for the community. Despite the demands of classwork and employment, Ferris students volunteer thousands of hours every year to a wide range of worthy causes and organizations.

The most visible of these is The Big Event, which brings together Ferris students to assist Big Rapids homeowners who need help with house and lawn chores. This year a record number of students fanned out across our community to help area residents. The Big Event dramatically illustrates the positive impact our students have, leading to the strong, supportive relationship between Ferris and Big Rapids.

For a recap of this year's Big Event and a video showing our students in action, go to <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2015/april/bigevent.htm> .

Athletics

Our sports teams continue to have an extraordinary year of success. This week our men's golf team was selected for the NCAA tournament for the thirteenth season in a row. They will compete in the Midwest/Central Regional Super Tournament in Lemont, Ill., May 4-6. Junior golfer Ben Cook was named the GLIAC "Men's Golfer of the Year." Congratulations and best wishes go to coach Mike Migano and the men's golfers on this success.

Thank You

As we conclude the academic year it is good to take a few moments and reflect on some of the successes of this past year. I want to thank the entire Ferris community for the help, support, and efforts on many projects of importance to the future of our students, the future of our University, and the future of the communities we serve.

The opening of our renovated University Center this year illustrated the importance of physical resources to our educational mission. The University Center project involved many, many people at Ferris in one way or another, and that cooperation led to the timely completion of the project. Going forward, the work we are doing on our Master Plan will guide future projects that will affect the classroom, living, social and athletic facilities our students use every day.

Much work has been done to implement our Strategic Plan that imbeds our core values of Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence, Learning and Opportunity throughout our university's efforts. This work on our Strategic Plan has positioned us well and created a coherent way to plan for how we best serve our students.

Much time this year was invested in selecting leadership for Academic Affairs and Kendall College of Design. The positive outcome of both of these searches required the concerted efforts of search committee members, and members of the university generally who attended open forums and contributed feedback on the candidates.

This past year we received a record donation from Phil and Jocelyn Hagerman and the Hagerman Foundation. This will make a lasting difference for our College of Pharmacy, and is an example of how successful alumni can support excellence and achievement for our academic efforts.

Our university has become a catalyst for broad support of the arts in our communities. Art Prize and DisArt in Grand Rapids and The Festival of the Arts in Big Rapids demonstrate extraordinary success which requires many hours of planning and volunteering at these events.

Admittedly this is only a partial list. There are numerous others that also should be included. Each of us can and does make a difference. For all of these efforts and many others, thank you.

David L. Eisler, president