

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
April 4, 2016

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## Economic Inequality Initiative

On Wednesday, April 13, at 4 p.m. in UCB 202A, there will be a community forum on economic inequality organized by Tony Baker of the Sociology department and inspired by Robert Putnam's book *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. Putnam initiated a national conversation on the economic and moral imperative of creating investments in educational equity. The forum will include special guests Teresa Weatherall Neal, superintendent of Grand Rapids Public Schools, and Tim Haist, superintendent of Big Rapids Public Schools.

Questions for discussion will include

- What distinct barriers do children from lower income communities encounter as they travel through educational experiences?
- What can institutions of higher education and K-12 do together to alleviate these barriers?
- From the community vantage point, what is required to assist students once they get to college?

Organizers hope to bring more clarity and compassion to this social issue and help reverse the diminishing prospects of children born into disadvantage. It is my opinion that the negative impact of socio-economic conditions on college enrollment and completion is the greatest problem facing the future of American higher education. Please plan to attend and become engaged in this conversation and dialogue.

## International Festival of Cultures

The International Festival of Cultures, one of our University's signature events, will be held April 10, from 1 to 5 p.m., in the UCB 202. Hosted by the Office of International Education and sponsored by the President's Office, the Festival features more than 500 international students from 40 different countries. The event includes food, dancing, games and music. This year marks the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Festival as an occasion to strengthen campus global awareness and to celebrate international cultural diversity. More information is available by accessing this [news release](#). As with the Economic Inequality Initiative, I hope that you can attend.

## Strategic Planning and Resource Council

The final SPARC meeting of this academic year will take place on Tuesday, April 12, at 3 p.m. in UCB 202A. I will be providing an update and discussing the success of our ongoing efforts to reduce student debt and assure that a Ferris education remains within the economic reach of our students. As always, SPARC meetings are open to the entire Ferris community. I look forward to sharing this information with you.

## Good News

Remarkably, we complete the regular instructional portion of the spring semester this month, with the first week of May being devoted to exam week and commencement. At this advanced point in the semester we have a substantial list of Good News items to report. As usual, this is only a sample of the many positive accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni. The full listing of this month's Good News items is one of the longest I can recall, over 11 pages in length. For the complete document as well an archive of previous lists, please [click on this link](#).

- The College of Business has been approved to have a Delta Mu Delta Chapter honor society that recognizes and encourages the academic excellence of students. Plans include initial induction ceremonies in October 2016.

- Mischelle Stone, School of Criminal Justice, made a number of presentations at the Academy of Justice Sciences in Orlando, Fla.
- An episode of "Expect Diversity," produced by Television and Digital Media Production students in the Studio Production course under the direction of faculty member Glen Okonoski, and in collaboration with host Dr. David Pilgrim, was recognized with a Broadcast Education Association Award - 1st Place, Television News Magazine. Recent TDMP graduate Jesse Woodworth was the student Producer of the episode and Dr. Rita Walters, Social Work, was one of the guests.
- The "Chroma Key Project," produced by TDMP students Chris Martin and Jake VanAuker was awarded a Media Communications Association - International Award, Bronze Reel. The award-winning work was an assignment within TDMP's Advanced Compositing course offered by Nick Kuiper.
- Dr. Vanessa Wyss traveled to Mesa, Ariz., to participate in a National Science Foundation-funded project in which she learned how to implement STEM in the classroom.
- The Surveying Engineering program has been designated as a Link (local section) of the Order of the Engineer, which was initiated to foster a spirit of pride and responsibility in the engineering profession, to bridge the gap between training and experience, and to present to the public a visible symbol identifying the engineer.
- The Welding Engineering Technology Hall of Fame welcomed its initial eight inductees during a recent luncheon. The Hall of Fame acknowledges outstanding leaders who have excelled and achieved significant success in the welding industry and are intrinsically linked to the Welding Engineering Technology program at Ferris.
- Approximately 40 upper elementary and middle school students from MOISD schools gathered on campus for a Robotics and Coding Competition thanks in part to a Michigan STEM Partnership grant. Student volunteers from the College of Engineering Technology served as judges.
- Over the past few weeks, Leigha Compson, Debbie Dawson, and Angie Mishler have hosted several Technology Engineering Aptitude events to encourage young women to consider career opportunities in engineering and other STEM-related fields.
- Corporate and Professional Development recently completed workforce development efforts for nine companies with most of the funding awarded through "Skilled Trades Training Funds."
- Two Health Professions faculty committees recently offered professional development for their colleagues in the form of new "Lunch and Learn" or "Brown Bag Lunch" series. Vanessa Marr facilitated the session, "Healing the Fissures Part 2: Culturally-Responsive Learning," sponsored by the CHP Diversity & Inclusion Committee.
- Kendall Graphic Design students dominated the student categories in the 2016 West Michigan ADDY Awards, winning 37 out of the 40 awards. Congratulations to student winners Kylie Bergstrom, Madison Bracken, Breanne Buckbee, Danae Doub, Amar Džomba, Nicole Fuller, Helen Gardner, Spencer High, Elise Jadwin, Abby Kiekover, Jessica Leng, Deanna Lucas, Lindsey Milliron, Oliva Mizner, Danielle Obenauf, Brittany Parritt, Zac Sturgeon, Josephine Uhila, Fan Wu, and Alyssa Zick.
- Furniture Design student Heather Seto was named the winner of the 2016 Bienenstock Furniture Design Competition. Seto, a finalist in last year's competition, took home 1<sup>st</sup> place and a \$5,000 scholarship with her Nocturne lounge chair design. The Furniture Design program received \$1,000 in conjunction with the win.
- Industrial Design students Bobby Adderley and Tori Williams, and Industrial Design alumna Sopheari Mork ('12) were a part of the "THNX" team that won the Gumption Award and the Crowd Favorite Award at Startup Weekend Grand Rapids 2016.
- Interior Design students Alexandra Pelton and Danielle Rose were named regional winners in the 2016 Interior Design Educators Council Student Design Competition.
- Director of Continuing Studies Brenda Sipe delivered her presentation "Leading Leadership Development: Is Gender Specific Training Necessary?" at the recent League for Innovation in the Community Colleges Annual Conference in Chicago.
- Karen Carter, Art History, presented her paper "Contamination through the eyes: The Censorship of Illustrated Posters in Fin-de-siècle Paris" at the Nineteenth Century French Studies Colloquium at Princeton, and served as the chair for the discussion panel "Mobilizing Art: Print and Posters in

World War I France,” at Conference of the Society for French Historical Studies in Nashville, Tenn. Carter also published “Masterpieces for Rag Pickers: Working-Class Crowds, Collective Spectatorship, and Censorship of Posters in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Paris” in the journal *Space and Culture*.

- James Arendt ('01, Painting) was featured in a solo exhibition titled “Those of Us Still Living” at the Western Illinois University Art Gallery.
- The Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group members recently received an award for “Rookie Site of the Year,” for being an outstanding clinical research site. This team consists of investigators Paula McDowell, Alison Jenerou, Sarah Hinkley, Mark Swan, and coordinator Kerrie Currie.
- MCO students Morgan Schuiteman, Michael DeWit, and Gabrielle Maggio, as well as adjunct faculty/residents, Dr. Theresa Aris, Dr. Emily Aslakson, and Dr. Nick Gidosh volunteered at the Vision section of the Pathway to Health event in Cedar Lake. The goal of the event was to provide access to free eye care, including glasses.
- The Students in Need of Eyecare program was featured in the Fremont Area Community Foundation’s Winter 2016 publication.
- MCO faculty member Dr. Sarah Hinkley has been accepted into the National Academies of Practice as a representative of the American Academy of Optometry.
- Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy and CEO Phil Hagerman, invited Pharmacy faculty and staff to a day-long visit, including presentations and a tour of DSP’s Flint facility.
- Christine Conley-Sowels, Monica Frees, Deedee Stakley, Dave McCall and Kristin Conley presented at the Teaching Academic Survival and Success Conference on “Providing Equal Access to U3 Students: Bridging the Gap Between High School and College; Diversity.”
- Jordan Dawkins, Melanie Trinh, and Deb Savides presented work done by the Honors Program Diversity and Inclusion Task Force at the inaugural Honors Inclusion Conference at Oakland University. The task force includes Caitlyn Toering, Cindy Tran, Jordan Dawkins, Melanie Trinh and Peter Bradley.
- The men’s ice hockey team had a league-best 18 student-athletes named to the WCHA All-Academic Team this year. Ferris also had a conference-high 14 scholar-athlete honorees.
- A total of 34 student-athletes from the winter sports teams including men’s and women’s basketball along with men’s and women’s indoor track and field achieved GLIAC All-Academic and All-Academic Excellence Team honors.
- Ferris State University Athletics and the Bulldog Athletic Association announced the completion of the major \$1.5 million “Be A Playmaker” endowment campaign for the Bulldog men’s ice hockey program. It was Ferris State’s first athletics-based major fundraising campaign.
- More than 30 Ferris employees attended the webinar, “Homeless & Food-Insecure Students: Help Them Overcome Barriers So They Can Succeed.” The Diversity and Inclusion Office has compiled a [list of area food resources](#).
- Ferris will host the 2017 Equity Within the Classroom Conference. The Ferris planning group is led by Todd Stanislav, Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning, and Olukemi Fadayomi, Biology, an FCTL Faculty-in-Residence Scholar.
- Charles Williams, a goaltender on the Ferris hockey team, was selected as a semi-finalist for the [Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Award](#). Williams was the national winner for his individual sport.
- The Latino Talent Initiative will graduate its third cohort in April in Grand Rapids. Among this year’s participants is Karla Perez-Garza, coordinator of the FSU Promise Partners Mentoring Program.
- Over 40 Big Rapids’ community members and Ferris faculty, staff and students attended the annual Lansing Legislative Luncheon. They were joined by an excellent turnout of legislators, staff, and state department heads. The University spotlighted its capital improvement project for the Swan Expansion and the Veterans programs.
- A new marketing/recruitment piece for fall 2016 freshmen and transfer students was created by Enrollment Services to inform students about their financial aid award.
- Twenty-nine staff members from Harper College in Palatine, Illinois are enrolled in the Ferris Doctorate of Community College Leadership now offered at their college.

- The Birkam Health and Personal Counseling Centers welcome Staff Physician Dr. Peter S. VanDeMark to Ferris. Dr. VanDeMark is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and has over 30 years of experience practicing medicine in the Big Rapids community.
- Nick Smith, Center for Leadership Activities and Career Services, had a book review of *Good Food Revolution: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities* by Will Allen published in the newest issue of *Journal of College Orientation and Transition*.
- Michele Albright, CLACS, has received certification as a Federal Employment Advisor through the Partnership for Public Service.
- During the CLACS Volunteer Center Month of Caring (March 2016), Ferris students:
  - Collected over 600 gallons of maple sap at a nature preserve that will be used to create product that are sold to support environmental education
  - Donated over 100 stuffed animals to Helen DeVos Children's Hospital
  - Provided over 20 hours of assistance in a homeless clothing distribution center
  - Handmade 10 blankets for the WISE shelter
  - Provided recreational activities for elderly residents at Altercare
- Michigan Golf Hall of Fame members have to date committed \$145,000 to the PGM Learning Center Campaign, to support the future new home of the Michigan Golf Hall of Fame. PGM alumni continue to support the campaign with over 80 pledges and gifts totaling over \$126,000.
- The Alumni Association, the Ferris Bookstore and the Commencement Office hosted more than 850 graduating seniors during the Graduation Fair.
- The Ferris Alumni Association hosted a pre-game alumni and fan reception for more than 400 at the Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids prior to the Bulldogs WCHA Final Five semi-final and championship games. The next weekend the association hosted a pre-game reception at the Eagle Street Grille, in St. Paul, Minn. prior to the Bulldogs NCAA West Regional Tournament. More than 130 alumni and fans participated during the two days. Special thanks to the Ferris Pep Band for attending and playing at the opening event.
- Paul Hobart, Web Developer in University Advancement and Marketing, hosted a session "The Ferris Website: Making Data-Based Decisions Using Google Analytics," during the recent Web Development and Maintenance Employee Resource Group session at the Staff Center for Training and Development.
- The News Services and Social Media Team collaborated with the university's Pride Committee to host the 2016 Ferris Pride Spring Break Photo Contest in March. [Click this link](#) to see the winners of the contest, as they collected their prize, and for an additional link to view their winning photo.
- The News Services and Social Media Team and the College of Engineering Technology's Welding Engineering Technology program collaborated with Airgas Corporation to highlight a donation of approximately \$50,000 in safety equipment.

What an impressive listing of accomplishments and recognitions this is. Thank you for the excellent work you do for Ferris and in representing the best of our university to others.

David L. Eisler, president