



Points of Pride



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FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Imagine More **SPRING 2010**



President's Corner

Our 2009-10 academic year recently culminated with Spring Commencement, an event that truly celebrates the achievements of our students as they begin the next phase of their life journey. During commencement, I was able to tell some of the stories of challenge and success represented in our graduates. These are impressive men and women who worked very hard and overcame significant obstacles in earning their degrees.

At commencement, we also conferred an honorary doctoral degree upon Jennifer Ramsey Wallace, "The TIP Lady." Jennifer is outreach manager for Financial Aid Programs for the Michigan Education Trust. In that capacity she has helped thousands of students and played a major role in helping Ferris expand the Tuition Incentive Program.

Having launched the careers of this newest class of Ferris alumni, we already anticipate a new class of freshmen this fall. Our efforts on their behalf will not only help them realize their own achievements but also contribute to how they will advance Ferris and Big Rapids during their time here. Creating those opportunities for success remains our mission as we begin our second 125 years of providing innovative, career-oriented education.

David L. Eisler

Two Receive Honorary Doctoral Degrees

Jennifer Ramsey Wallace "The Tip Lady"

Honorary Doctorate of Public Service
Jennifer Ramsey Wallace is outreach manager for Financial Aid Programs for the Michigan Education Trust, which is housed in the Bureau of Student Financial Assistance in the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Known across the state to thousands of children and parents as the "TIP Lady," Wallace provides Financial Literacy and Financial Aid presentations to more than 100,000 students and parents each year. She covers such topics as "Where's the Money?" and "Mission Possible!" Her students must all tell her, "If I believe, I can achieve," at the end of each of her presentations.

The Center for Michigan selected Wallace as "one of the many things working well in Michigan in 2009," the same year Detroit Public Schools presented her with an Outstanding Educator Award. She is listed in the *Directory of Distinguished Americans* 3rd Edition for Service to her Community. She is a National Center for Education Statistics Fellow and has received numerous accolades from schools, the YMCA, the GAP State Student Summit Initiative and many others.

She has received a Mayoral Tribute for her work as director of the Tuition Incentive Program and has been recognized by Michigan State Senator Dan DeGrow and Michigan Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan for her efforts to improve educational opportunities for youth in the state. Wallace was recognized as a Bridge Builder by the Greater Lansing Urban League and is a member of the National Urban League's Quarter Century Club for more than 25 years of community service. She was inducted into Who's Who of International Business in 2003.

She is a longtime advocate for children and families and spends numerous volunteer hours in service to students and families throughout the state of Michigan. Wallace is on the Alumni Board of Directors of the Michigan State University College of Social Science, and also is on the Board of the MSU Black Alumni. She continues to be an active and committed volunteer in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, generously giving her time and attention to children in her area.

Wallace played a big role in helping Ferris expand the Tuition Incentive program. The university has created a TIP Scholars program and more than doubled the number of TIP students to more than 700 in the past two years. Wallace's honesty, professionalism, grace and endless energy are second to none.



As she herself says, "We are on the planet to make a difference, and we just have to make that difference one day at a time, one kid at a time, one family at a time."

Joseph F. Carroll

After 33 years with one of the industry's most respected publications, Joe Carroll has recently retired as publisher of *Furniture Today*, the leading trade magazine of the American residential furniture industry. *Furniture Today* is published weekly and has more than 22,000 subscribers worldwide.

Carroll taught at several colleges and universities in the United States before changing careers. At the age of 30 he went to work for J. P. Hogan & Company in Knoxville, Tenn., an advertising agency that specializes in home furnishings accounts, where he became vice-president/account supervisor. He joined *Furniture Today* in High Point, N.C., in 1977 at the end of its first year in business. He was promoted to publisher in 1985.

He frequently speaks at industry conferences, furniture markets and sales meetings. He has appeared in both live and taped broadcasts during the High Point Market and was a regular guest on the nationally syndicated TV show, "Haven," sponsored by the Home Furnishings Council. In 1997, the International Home Furnishings Representatives Association named him "Pillar of the Industry."

He is past-president of the American Furniture Hall of Fame; past-chairman of the International Alliance of Furnishing Publications; chairman of the High Point University Home Furnishings Advisory Board; and serves on the board of directors of the High Point Museum, High Point Chamber of Commerce and String & Splinter Club, Inc. He also is president of the Piedmont Triad Council for International Visitors. In recognition of his contributions to the furniture industry, he received the City of Hope 2006 Spirit of Life award. In 2009, he was elected to the American Furniture Hall of Fame.

Carroll also writes a column, "Furniture," for the Life Section of the *Greensboro News & Record*. He is the author of four home furnishings tabletop books: *The Perfect Home: Living In Style*, *The Perfect Home: Celebrity Designer Collections*, *The Perfect Home: Best of Style* and *The Perfect Home: Making Room For Kids*.

He received a B.A. in Liberal Arts from the University of Virginia and a master's in Romance Languages and Literature from Princeton University. He studied a year in Paris at the Sorbonne.



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College of Allied Health Sciences

Byington Fourth Generation Ferris Grad

Carl Byington knew he wanted to attend college at Ferris State University. In fact, he says he was dead set on becoming a Bulldog. So, when his acceptance letter arrived in the mail, he was on cloud nine.

Byington wouldn't be the first in his family to become a Bulldog. Attending Ferris has been a family affair beginning with his great-grandfather, Stanley Byington, who earned a Pharmacy degree. The family legacy does not stop there for the Byron Center native. His grandfather, Dick Byington; father, Jim Byington; and uncle, John Byington, all earned Pharmacy degrees from Ferris.

"I have wanted to attend school at Ferris ever since hearing stories about the university's progress from a local college to a statewide university," Carl says. "My uncle helped found Ferris' Student Government Association, and he used to talk about the concerts and fund raisers they held; and my grandpa would talk about football games."

It's no wonder Carl called Ferris home.

"By far, the best times of my life have been at Ferris," he says. "This institution is absolutely wonderful, not only academically but with extracurricular activities, too. Everyone has something they can be a part of. Ferris is leading the way in being a diverse college."

Finding his niche at Ferris is why Carl opted to change his major from pre-Pharmacy to Medical Technology. It was a presentation to his Chemistry class during his second year of college by Clinical Coordinator Daniel deRegnier that

opened the door to a new possibility. A tour of the College of Allied Health Sciences laboratory sealed the deal.

Carl says he couldn't be happier with his career choice.

"I can't describe how much satisfaction comes with this job," he says, explaining his work helps physicians with their diagnoses of patients' problems. "It feels awesome to know my skills and abilities can help determine whether a patient gets better.

"At the end of the day, it makes you feel good about what you do."

He credits his success to the faculty and staff of Ferris' Medical Technology program, who prepare graduates to hit the ground running upon completing their degree, he says.

For example, prior to completing their degree with an internship, Medical Technology students are required to participate in a semester of Simulated Laboratory to prepare them for the daily rigors of work life.

"The 'sim lab' bridges the gap from being a student to being a medical technologist," he says, adding he wishes people were more familiar with the Medical Technology profession.

While professionals in this field do not get a lot of patient interaction, the career choice is good for someone who enjoys solving puzzles. He explains if you enjoy being given a problem with the responsibility of finding a solution, this career might interest you.

Carl also places his chips on Ferris as prospective students' best bet when choosing a college.

"A diverse college is a successful college...any student even remotely considering Ferris would be crazy not to attend school here."

Carl's success is a good indicator, too. Now that he has completed his internship at Mid-Michigan Medical Center in Midland, the world is his oyster as he pursues job opportunities within the Medical Technology profession.

College of Arts and Sciences

Workman Makes Musical Mark as Pep Band Student Conductor

Jason Workman remembers his first musical audition at Ferris State University for Music Center associate professor Dr. Richard Scott Cohen: "It was informal, and he asked me to play my scales. I knew the notes, I just didn't know the scales," he says.

"I still remember what Dr. Cohen said, 'Well, you're a diamond in the rough. We'll see what you can do.'

"The funny thing is I still don't know my scales," Workman quips.

The Bridgman, Mich., senior may not know his warm-up scales but he has made a mark on Ferris' musical landscape.

He's performed eight semesters with the Ferris Symphony Band and played four years with the Pep Band, the last two of which he served as student conductor.

As student conductor of the Pep Band, Workman set the bar high for future conductors.

A typical student conductor takes the reins of Pep Band leadership in their last year of school, but Workman is anything but typical. He applied for the post as a freshman and eventually filled the role as a junior. But, it wasn't always smooth sailing. Especially considering his first audition for student conductor didn't go as well as one would want, Music Center faculty Dale Skornia notes.



Workman remembers this audition as a scary moment for him, as a freshman applying to become student conductor. "Some of the kids were 24 or 25...I was just 18 years old at the time. I didn't command the respect with them an older student might."

But, with a little hard work, and a can-do attitude in tow, Workman ultimately gained the respect of his bandmates, peers and sports fans.

"Even from his first audition for student conductor to his second, I was amazed at his immediate growth. It's wonderful to see how Jason has grown as a person during the past four years," Skornia adds.

Seeing his students' growth as they prepare to graduate is bitter sweet for Skornia, who notes students graduating this May arrived at Ferris four years ago just as he did. They grew from the Ferris experience together, he says.

It's seeing the growth in Workman that gave Skornia complete trust in him to run rehearsal, and make logical musical and educational decisions.

Despite parting with the bar set high, Workman left no stone unturned before graduating. He's already spent time working with the next student conductor.

His words of advice: "Don't wait until the end of the year to try new things with the band. Know in the end you'll be appreciated for what you do. Don't dwell on the small stuff. Don't underestimate what you do."

And, if there's one piece of advice he can give to incoming freshmen, it's to hit the ground running once they arrive at Ferris.

"You go through your four years before you know it," he says. "People say they don't want to be too busy. Well, I don't think that's a legitimate reason not to be a part of something."

"Find out what you're good at and an organization you want to devote your time to and make it work," he states.

So, what's next for the Biotechnology major? Workman plans to gain experience in the workforce as a laboratory technician or research assistant prior to applying to graduate school. Eventually, he hopes to earn a Ph.D. in molecular genetics and work as principle investigator in a laboratory or as a professor.

College of Business Schnell Credits Support Network for Success

Kelsey A. Schnell smiled with pride as he graduated this May with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a minor in Political Science.

The inspiration behind Schnell's smile runs deeper than earning his degree. The Bay City native is also smiling for his great aunt, Marjorie Denison, who died on April 23, 2010.

"Aunt Marge" was a major part of Schnell's Big Rapids support system.

"Her doors (both the house and refrigerator) were always open to me," Schnell says. "Before she passed away, I put on my cap and gown for her, and pride was clearly visible in her smile."

Remembering his great aunt, her advice is still ringing in his ears.

"We were kindred spirits. I would stop over to her house a few times a week and update her on my life, have a cup of coffee and just talk," Schnell recalls. "She was an educator for Big Rapids Public Schools and an important figure in the community. She was always so humble and kind. She would say, 'To whom much is given, much is expected.' She was right."

Schnell, perhaps mostly widely known as editor-in-chief of the *Ferris State Torch* student newspaper, also cites his parents Kurt and Patrice Schnell, who also is a Ferris graduate, as a strong support network. He adds, "I'm lucky to have cool parents that get this whole college thing and trust me to make good decisions."

He has worked to always make his parents proud.

"I've looked forward to taking the next steps for awhile, and the fact that my time here as a student is coming to a close is daunting," Schnell says. "I've always felt that I'm a pretty average student but with extraordinary opportunities. Ferris was the right fit for me."

Beyond academics, Schnell has been active in several high-profile organizations at Ferris. As *Torch* editor-in-chief, he says he has increased the paper's readership, enhanced its Web and social media presence, and promoted campus goodwill through "strong, responsible journalism." In addition to an expected 26-hour work week at the newspaper and then some, Schnell has been affiliated with the Ferris State Red Cross and Ferris Recyclers, leaving him minimal idle time.

"I'm graduating with a degree; I've been managing what is essentially a small business in the *Torch* all year; I've made great contacts and friendships with extraordinary people; and I've had fun," Schnell says. "Any college experience is a good opportunity to learn, both in the classroom and beyond."

"My college experience was exceptional," he adds.

His work and influence now extends beyond the Ferris campus.

Schnell, and fellow Ferris student Brandon Martinez, developed a



non-profit Web site, the *College Newsroom*. The site is described as “a resource and community for collegiate journalists, editors, designers and everyone else involved with campus newspapers to share, critique, commend and learn to continuously improve the world of college newspapers and beyond.”

“*College Newsroom* continues to grow and be successful as a not-for-profit resource for college newspaper staff all over the country,” Schnell said. The site is www.collegenewsroom.org.

Schnell, keeper of a busy and ambitious schedule, emphasizes that he is no different than his fellow students in the sense that he contends with the same issues and concerns all college students must endure.

“I’ve been dealing with the same stuff that all students deal with,” he says. “This is a time when perspectives change and personality is truly formed. There have always been issues with money, grades, time and my future, but I’ve been lucky to have those challenges and learn from them.”

Schnell’s success traces back to a support system that extends beyond his family to Ferris faculty who have been receptive, willing to listen and share their ideas and thoughts.

“There are loads of people who have played an integral role in my education and experience at Ferris, supporting and challenging me. Dr. Dave Steenstra of the College of Business is the best professor I ever had,” Schnell says. “From time-to-time we would pontificate in his office about the university, the world and my next steps.”

The future is up in the air for Schnell, who has won several awards during his time at Ferris including second place in a public speaking competition, the John F. McNamara Award for outstanding contribution and the Ferris Honors Outstanding Leadership Award.

“I don’t know what’s next, nothing definitive,” he says. “But, I know when people ask me where I graduated from, I will proudly tell them, ‘Ferris State.’”

College of Education and Human Services

Knoertzer’s Self-Motivation Serves as Inspiration, Example

Growing up, college was not at the forefront of Angie Knoertzer’s mind, the first person in her family to attend college. In fact, it wasn’t until her junior year of high school she even considered college an option.

“You don’t know what you don’t know,” she says. “I didn’t know I needed college.”

It was basketball coach Jim Lake who encouraged thoughts of a college education. “He told me, ‘You’re going to college.’”

That’s why Knoertzer feels it’s so important for high schoolers to get involved. She credits her engagement in extra-curricular activities at the high school level as a catalyst for her endeavors as a college student.

Fast forward to 2010 and the Chippewa Lake native has earned her bachelor’s degree in Recreation Leadership and Management, and associate degree in Printing Management. None of which would have been possible without the support of her family, she says.

“My family has been a huge influence on my life, and I am so thankful for all of their support,” she adds.

She also credits Ferris and the education she’s received from faculty.

“Ferris is a really great school,” she says. “I was excited to attend Ferris because of the diverse learning

opportunities offered. You’re interacting with people; everything is hands-on. There are small classes in which you’re not always sitting and listening to a lecture. That’s huge for me. I learn by interacting with people.”

Susan Hastings-Bishop says Knoertzer should credit herself. As a professor of Recreation, Leisure Services and Wellness, Hastings-Bishop explains she can give her students the tools to be successful, but it’s up to them to be motivated enough to take those tools and use them.

“Angie is a self-starter. She hit the ground running and managed to succeed against the odds,” Hastings-Bishop says.

University Recreation Director Cindy Horn agrees.

“Angie is a mentor and someone who provides a great example,” Horn says. “She’s a quiet leader. People naturally want to follow her. She’s someone I want to follow. She is truly an inspirational young lady.”

Horn notes Knoertzer doesn’t just give her energy and time to a project because she wants something in return. “She wants to help.”

Knoertzer acknowledges she takes initiative. “I’m the type who wants to figure things out,” she adds.

This attitude goes hand-in-hand with her advice to students: “Don’t sit back and wait for someone to do it for you. You will never excel or grow if you’re being spoon-fed information. So put yourself in uncomfortable situations. Don’t be afraid to challenge yourself. Otherwise, you’re really limiting yourself.”

For Knoertzer, the proof is in the pudding. She already has landed a job with the Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois, where she will be working at the station’s youth center with its School-Age Care program – an opportunity that presented itself while she was on internship at the station during spring semester.

“It feels amazing to have this job opportunity,” she says. “I strongly believe a place fits you and you fit the place.”





College of Engineering Technology

Link Perseveres Through Challenging Final Semester

In his final semester at Ferris State University that culminated with earning a Bachelor of Science in Automotive Engineering Technology, Brian Link persevered through a challenging schedule, and more significantly, a painful family loss.

A native of Baltimore, Md., Link juggled a 16- to 17-credit-hour semester with a 15- to 20-hour weekly lab assistant schedule, along with being the leader of the Hybrid SAE team. He also had to overcome the sudden death in February of his younger brother, who was a 3rd class cadet in the Coast Guard Academy.

"My parents, friends and faculty all have helped support me during my experiences at Ferris," Link says. "Kelly Hicks, the Automotive department's secretary, has especially helped me throughout my entire career at Ferris."

It has not been easy, and College of Engineering Technology faculty and staff say Link's achievements are a testament to his dedication and second-to-none work ethic.

"He is without a doubt our best graduate this year," says William Wagner, assistant professor of Automotive Engineering Technology. "It's well-known here that I always choose the best student to teach these labs for me.

"I chose Brian because of his skills and his attitude," Wagner adds. "He does labs completely on his own, evaluates them, scores them and gets the paperwork to me. He has just done a splendid job for me."

Link, a member of the Society of Automotive Engineers who transferred to Ferris with an associate degree in Automotive Technology from the Community College of Baltimore, sees his lab work as a component of his Ferris education that will be the foundation for his future.

"To me, graduating from Ferris gave me a balance of classroom and hands-on experience that has given me a more well-rounded skill set," Link says. The diverse Automotive Engineering program has exposed me to many facets of the industry, including quality engineering, product development, testing and manufacturing."

The recipient of the Automotive Engineering Outstanding Student of the Year Award, Link speaks highly of his Ferris education.

"I was able to take many courses that have been practical, will benefit me professionally and prepare me for a graduate program," he explains. "I also have been able to apply the knowledge and principles learned in the classroom into real-world applications such as the formula hybrid car and other research projects.

"My time spent as a lab assistant has given me a year's worth of hands-on dynamometer and flow bench testing that will benefit my career area," he adds.

Link is optimistic about his future armed with a degree that is largely built on the value of a career-oriented, hands-on Ferris education.

"Ferris has definitely given me the opportunity to put myself in a good position to start a great career," Link concludes. "The hands-on methodology is one thing that really sets this program apart from others. Reading about theory in textbooks is one thing, but being able to apply what you learned in the real world is an entirely different situation. Ferris has allowed me to do just that."

Michigan College of Optometry

Weidmayer Balances Life as Mother, Wife and Student

As a mother, wife and student in the Michigan College of Optometry, Sara Weidmayer of Jackson performed an astonishing balancing act in her pursuit to become a doctor of Optometry.

Now, she swells with pride when reflecting on her time at Ferris and being able to remain committed to being a loving mom and dedicated wife to her husband, Nick, and son, Caleb.

"Ferris is a great university, and I thoroughly enjoyed my time as a student there and in the Michigan College of Optometry," she says.

Earning her first degree from Ferris in 2007, a Bachelor of Science in Vision Science, Weidmayer will spend the next year completing an Ocular Disease residency at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center.

As she prepares to begin the next chapter in her life, Weidmayer feels prepared as she moves on to her residency.

"I'm proud to be a Ferris alumnae and hope to stay connected to FSU and MCO in the future."

While at Ferris, Weidmayer worked tirelessly to maximize her time at the university – particularly during her undergraduate years. She was active in Residential Life as a resident advisor, program coordinator and community advisor.

She also positioned herself to earn and receive a host of scholarships that helped ease her financial burden. She received the Ferris State University Founders' Scholarship (2003-07), the MCO Alumni Endowment Scholarship (2007), a Vistakon Acuvue Eye Health Advisor Student Citizenship Scholarship (2008), the Walman Optical Company Scholarship (2009) and the Michigan Foundation for Vision Awareness Scholarship (2009).

She was a College of Arts and Sciences Dean's List student from 2003-07 and was a MCO Dean's List student from 2006-10.



Weidmayer has been involved in the Student Alumni Gold Club, Pre-optometry Club, Hall Council and more. While in MCO, she participated in the Fellowship of Christian Optometrists and Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity.

Having a full plate from the time she arrived at Ferris, Weidmayer notes her biggest challenge was striking a balance between academics and life.

"Certainly, the purpose of going to college is to learn, but there is much to learn beyond the classroom," the Coldwater native says. "I often struggled with making time for my family, for the ministry (His House) and for myself.

"However, I had a lot of years of schooling to practice and perfect this balance, and by the end I'd say I got it close to right," she adds.

Weidmayer also has been active with His House Christian Fellowship since she arrived at Ferris as a freshman in 2003. She has been on four mission trips to Juarez, Mexico, to build homes, and she and her husband, former associate campus minister with His House, want to continue to stay involved with the ministry.

"My college years were a tremendous experience, and the benefits I've reaped have been innumerable," Weidmayer says. "Aside from my degrees, which are an obvious benefit of my time at Ferris, I'd say the biggest benefit of my time in Big Rapids is the relationships that I've built. Being at Ferris was a catalyst for a number of my now closest relationships."

College of Pharmacy

Franklin Finds Success with Sunny at Her Side

With a plan in hand, Valarie Franklin and her service dog, Sunny, arrived at Ferris State University ready to hit the books.

The self-professed planner says it didn't matter if her plotted course changed along the way as long as she had a goal to work toward.

Having a passion for medicine, Franklin's plan came to fruition this spring as she was awarded a Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

Setting goals is what has helped the Davison native find success in her endeavors. Another factor in Franklin's success has been Sunny, a 10-year-old Golden Retriever.

Franklin has Osteogenesis Imperfecta, or Brittle Bone Disease. Sunny's presence has allowed her to enjoy college and live on her own. She says her Ferris experience with Sunny has been great.

"People ask about Sunny and want to know more about him," she says.

"In fact, I joke that when I go places people immediately say with enthusiasm, 'Hi Sunny,' and then they say, 'Oh, hi Val,'" she laughs, adding it doesn't bother her when Sunny is the center of attention.

She is pleased Sunny has been welcomed with open arms wherever she goes. But, as Franklin's career as a pharmacist begins, Sunny will soon retire from his profession as a service dog. Franklin says due to Sunny's age, a successor will soon replace him.



Franklin's new service dog, River, is completing training in five to six months, at which time Sunny will retire to a more leisurely lifestyle around the house, she says.

While Franklin's Ferris experience has been positive, she says her advice to incoming freshmen is to recognize it's okay to change your major. She also notes a student's undergraduate classes are the building blocks for the future.

"Students don't think they need to take classes that are not part of their major," she explains. "But, they need to realize the classes you take as an undergraduate gain in relevance the further along you get in your college education."

With her cousin inquiring about the pharmacy profession, Franklin says students also shouldn't be swayed by salary. "You have to be prepared to work hard," she adds.

She points out she wasn't the only one working hard, though. Franklin offers kudos to not only the Pharmacy program's faculty with whom she's developed close relationships, but she also wants to note her appreciation of the college's secretarial staff.

"When you have a problem, they're always there to help," she says. "I knew before calling that even if the problem was beyond their scope of duty, they would help me find an answer."

"It's great knowing such amazing people really care about being there for the students."

College of Professional and Technological Studies Petz Keeps Focus on Dream of College Degree

Life has dealt Marc Petz a series of challenges he has had to overcome on his journey to graduation from Ferris State University.

When Petz, 29, first began pursuing his bachelor's degree at Ferris, he already had a full-time job that kept him away from home three to four days a week. While online classes did help ease the burden, academic scheduling soon became a minor blip on the screen in what lie ahead for the Wyoming, Mich., native and 1999 graduate of Kelloggsville High School.

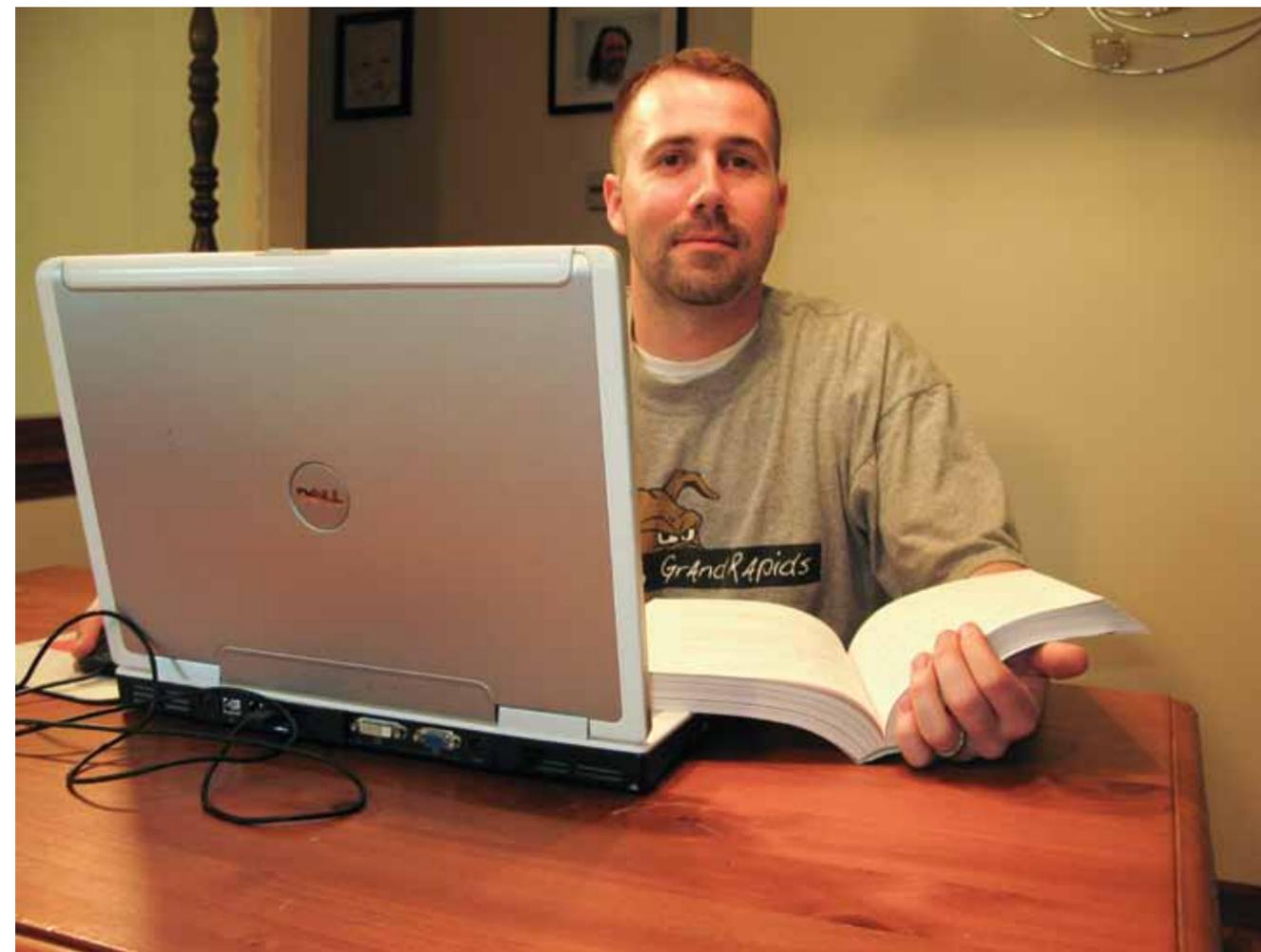
"About a year into the program, my dad unexpectedly passed away. Finding a balance between allowing time to grieve and staying focused on school was a big challenge," he says.

"In my second year, my wife and I had our first child, which made time for homework even more limited. During my third year, I suffered a severely broken leg and ankle while I was in pre-season training for jet-ski racing. That caused me to cancel my summer classes and spend four months on disability leave from work at CSX railroad. In my last semester, my wife and I just had our second child, so now we have a 1-month-old baby and a 3-year-old."

Through the highs and lows, Petz has managed to keep focused on making his dream of earning a college degree come true, while at the same time earning Dean's List and other academic honors.

"Graduating from Ferris really means a lot to me because of the challenges I have faced. It was something I thought I never would do," he confesses. "After graduating high school, I went straight to working full-time and never had any intentions of attending college because I didn't quite know what I wanted to do."

He adds, "After working several years and feeling kind of stuck in life, I came across the Digital Animation and Game Design program at Ferris and signed up. I will be the first in my family to graduate college, which means a great deal to me because it sets an example for my children as they grow older and start thinking about college."



Petz credits support from faculty, staff and friends at Ferris, and in particular, the support he received from his family as the foundation of his success.

"My biggest supporter is my wife, Amy," he says. "She endured a lot of sacrifices because of the time that was spent on homework and projects over the past five-and-a-half years. I can never thank her enough for her support and patience."

Now, as Petz graduates from Ferris with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Digital Animation and Game Design and takes the next step toward his future, he plans to explore business or freelance opportunities, or a teaching position involving visual effects, and hopes to work on a feature film.

Contact Information

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More than 1,700 students at Ferris State University were candidates for degrees this spring, and they were honored during five ceremonies over two days.

Points of Pride

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