

Points of Pride

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY • WINTER 2009



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FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Imagine More



President's Corner

As the articles in this issue of *Points of Pride* make clear, people at Ferris are doing remarkable things. Andy Kantar's work in telling some of the stories of shipping in the Great Lakes, and Denise Mitten's sharing of lessons from her expertise in experiential education, show the varied ways in which our faculty continue to make Ferris a place where excellence thrives. As we anticipate our 125th celebration beginning in Fall 2009, such achievements are emblematic of the creativity and innovation that our faculty both exhibit themselves, and also inspire in their students.

Please join me in welcoming an important new member of the Ferris community – John Willey, the University's new vice president for University Advancement and Marketing. John's commitment to creativity and openness meshes well with Ferris' mission and values. As John joins the University we are very grateful for the contributions of Shelly Armstrong, who displayed these same qualities during the months she ably led this area as interim vice president.

I appreciate you and your continued efforts that have made Ferris the state's fastest-growing University.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Eisler".

David L. Eisler

On Campus

Willey Named Vice President for University Advancement and Marketing

John Willey, of Des Moines, Iowa, has accepted President David L. Eisler's offer to become the new vice president for University Advancement and Marketing.

The selection of Willey, who brings a career of more than 30 years in higher education and independent secondary education to meeting Ferris' challenges, ends an extensive national search that began last summer after the retirement of previous Vice President Rick Duffett. He will begin his new post in mid-January.

Willey has held appointments such as vice president for Institutional Advancement at Lyon College in Batesville, Ark.; vice president for Development and University Relations at Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio; and most recently at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, where he served as special counsel and vice president for Institutional Advancement.

HVACR Students 'Heat the Country'

The West Michigan Air Conditioning Contractors of America and the ACCA Ferris State University student chapter teamed up for the third annual "Heat the Country."

Six licensed contractors and six Ferris chapter ACCA students assisted two elderly women in Big Rapids by cleaning, servicing and replacing furnace parts at no service charge. The contractors and students also helped residents at Weston Jubilee Housing in Grand Rapids, and visited homes in Lowell, White Cloud and Grant.

"This is a good thing to do for the people around us," said Jan Anderson, HVACR department secretary and faculty advisor of the student chapter. "To help the less fortunate is the right thing to do."

In the three years of Ferris' contribution to "Heat the Country," 18 home furnaces have been serviced, Anderson added.

First Lady's Attic Helps Prepare Students for Success

Students at Ferris State University need not wonder anymore how they will afford to buy professional-looking clothing for a job or internship interview – or class presentation. First Lady's Attic will ensure that all Ferris students, male and female, are dressed appropriately for success.

"This is something I have been dreaming about for two years," shares Patsy Eisler, founder of First Lady's Attic. "With the foresight and collaboration of Chief Diversity Officer David Pilgrim and Vice President for Student Affairs Dan Burcham, this is now a reality.

"Here at Ferris we are committed to providing opportunities for our students. One way we can do this is to make certain they are appropriately dressed and have the best possible chance of achieving that first great job or internship. Looking the part and feeling confident in an interview or during a class presentation can make a world of difference," Eisler adds.

Once students choose their outfit, it is theirs to keep as they commence from the school environment into the world of work.

"This represents one way we can make tangible our commitment to opportunity, one of the core values of our University," Pilgrim notes.

First Lady's Attic is currently accepting donations of all men's and women's professional clothing. The Attic will gladly take not just "experienced" suits, but shirts, blouses, dress pants and skirts, blazers, dresses, shoes, ties, scarves, belts, jewelry, purses and briefcases.

All donations can be dropped off at either location of Pete's Cleaners in Big Rapids, a community supporter of The First Lady's Attic.

"I am just thrilled to be a part of this and happy that I can contribute to helping students look their best when interviewing," says Darin Cebulla, owner of Pete's Cleaners. "Just drop off your clothes you'd like to donate at either location on Hemlock or State Street and mention they are for First Lady's Attic, and I'll take care of the rest."

Clothing also may be dropped off on campus at the Ferris Diversity Office located in the Timme Center for Student Services, Room 312.

For more information about First Lady's Attic, e-mail flattic@ferris.edu or call (231) 591-3193.





On Campus Holiday Food Drive Helps Local Food Pantries

The Student Government Association's second annual Holiday Food Drive was more than successful this fall, raising more than 7,000 pounds of food. The 2007 effort raised just more than 5,000 pounds.

The food drive was organized as a way for students to help less fortunate community members during the holiday season, said Liz Cottrell, a sophomore from Commerce Township studying Business Administration who is chair of the food drive along with being Delta Zeta Sorority's SGA representative.

"It's good to help our community. It's been a rough year economically, and many organizations are helping out the community the best way they know how," said Amber Balmer, Student Government president and a senior public relations major from Columbia, Mo.

The food was donated to food banks throughout West Michigan, but as close to Big Rapids as possible, Balmer said.

62 Bikes Donated to Area Children Through Dump and Run Program

Thanks to the efforts of "Dump and Run," and area volunteers, 62 children received a bike this fall.

There were 46 children at Eagle Village and 10 through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program that benefited from the donation, with the remainder of bicycles being donated to area foster homes.

"Dump and Run" gives college students the opportunity to donate clothing, food, shoes and school supplies, among other gently used items, versus throwing them away as they move out of residence halls at the end of the school year.

Typically, Ferris' Department of Public Safety holds a summer bike sale for the bikes left around campus after students leave. This year, DPS decided to donate the bikes instead.

"Lots of students throw away perfectly good items just because they don't want to bother taking them home," said Kimberly Better of Carney, a P1 student in Ferris' Pharmacy program. "It gives students the opportunity to do something good for the community."

New Optometry Building Becomes a Reality

A new College of Optometry building will become a reality after state funding for a new facility was secured last fall. The exact design and location of the new facility have not been completed, but the project cost is finalized at \$26.9 million, with the state of Michigan providing 75 percent of the cost and Ferris responsible for raising the remaining 25 percent, or \$6.725 million.

To date, more than \$1.25 million has been pledged to the project or raised by the University for the modern health care facility, which will offer state-of-the-art eye and vision care, and support collaborative study in health education, in addition to a \$1 million gift from the Dow Foundation. As the only college of optometry in Michigan and one of 18 in the country that trains the majority of optometrists in the state, Ferris President David Eisler said a new facility is critical to the MCO's ability to continue to provide and support access to high-quality eye care throughout Michigan.

"Students being educated for the health professions should be trained in an environment that, as much as possible, is similar to that in which they will function after graduation," said Dr. Nancy Peterson-Klein, interim dean of the Michigan College of Optometry. "They should be exposed to a wide variety of patients, utilize state-of-the-art equipment and learn to work with support personnel and other health providers in this era of managed care. Patients treated by our students deserve a facility that will allow us to provide them state-of-the-art care."

Since the founding of the college, the scope of optometric practice has advanced to include the diagnosis and treatment of eye disease, training in the use of pharmaceuticals, fitting of soft and extended wear contact lenses, pre- and post-operative care of surgical patients and much more, said Dr. Mark Swan, chief of pediatrics and binocular vision services for MCO, immediate past-president of the Michigan Optometric Association and chief of optometry at St. Mary's Mercy Medical Center in Grand Rapids.

"MCO's outreach to the region is significant," Swan added. "Beyond its immediate clinic service area, the MCO participates in a number of programs for low-income families and needy children. We have conducted clinics for children of migrant workers, created a community-based eye clinic in Baldwin and made medical mission trips to Dominica, Africa and other underserved countries."

Additionally, it is anticipated that with a new 91,000-square-foot facility the current number of patient encounters in the eye and vision care clinic of more than 19,450 annually will increase by at least 10,000 per year with a ground floor, re-designed clinic.





Tunnel of Oppression Expands Educational Horizon

Martin Luther King Jr. had faith. He had faith in equality, in humanity, in the power of the human voice. In doing so, he had a dream.

It was with the power of the human voice he expressed that dream and encouraged others to take a stand against the social injustices of the world – the oppression in contemporary society that stripped mankind of its freedom.

And, his dream lives on.

Not only does his dream live on through a celebration of his life and work each January, but through such educational exhibits as the Tunnel of Oppression. At Ferris, organizers are hoping to spread King's message of hope during a weeklong series of events in January that includes organizing a Tunnel of Oppression.

The Tunnel of Oppression is an interactive exhibit that highlights issues of oppression in contemporary society. Its purpose is to increase awareness of global issues such as the genocide in Darfur while providing historical background on societal struggles throughout the decades, including the holocaust, racial segregation and women's rights, explains Mike Wade, MLK Jr. Committee co-chair.

First appearing at Ferris in 2005, the Tunnel of Oppression made its debut at Western Illinois University in 1993, and throughout the years, has been showcased on university campuses from coast to coast.

Setting out as a grassroots diversity program, the tunnel has evolved while staying true to its original goal of engaging emotions, encouraging reflective discussion and increasing awareness to issues of oppression.

The program at Ferris has evolved this year to provide a simpler format for viewing the interactive exhibit, which has expanded to include multimedia images and a DVD on the rise and fall of Jim Crow, Wade says.

Because the images included in the tunnel can be shocking and even disturbing, the experience is immediately followed by a reflection room highlighting the positive work of such notable civil rights activists as King and the many strides taken to improve the human condition worldwide.

MLK Jr. Committee member Andrea Beck-Jones notes this year's reflection room will focus on King, including a timeline of his life, a DVD looping positive images of his work and audio of his speeches. A wide variety of informational material also will be available to highlight



community services such as Women's Information Services, Inc. – a shelter for women and children afflicted by violence and domestic abuse – Project Starburst, a local food pantry, and the Diversity Action Team, a volunteer organization, among others.

"This is about students and the community seeing other people pick up the torch and raise awareness, and to understand that, hey, I can get involved, too," Beck-Jones says. "People don't have to sit on the sidelines. It's about getting the campus involved and students engaged."

MLK Jr. Committee Co-Chair Bonnie Wright agrees. "We all have a role, a job to do. The reflection room especially depicts how far we've come. We've truly come far, but we want people to say, 'If I participate, we can go farther.'"

Oppression has a far-reaching, global impact, Wade says. Expanding people's knowledge is a bridge builder and hopefully will inspire people to get involved.

As King once said, "Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

Knowledge is power and action is empowering.

"Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed," King once said.

To transcend King's dream requires self-reflection and asking life's urgent question according to King, "What are you doing for others?"

For further information about the Tunnel of Oppression, call the Office of Multicultural Student Services at (231) 591-2617.





Grant Creates Community Partnership

Ferris State University was awarded one of five grants designed to build community partnerships promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use. The \$24,896 grant partners Ferris with the city of Big Rapids, DTE Energy, Mecosta County, Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce and Mid Michigan Community Action Agency.

The grant is funded by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth but is only one of several components included in the proposal, which also includes in-kind contributions of time and resources by Ferris faculty and staff, and \$12,500 provided by the MMCAA, along with a grant award of up to \$30,000 from the DTE Foundation.

The proposal includes multiple tasks, Ferris' Director of Corporate and Professional Development Tom Crandell said, some of them including:

- MMCAA conducting energy audits for five low-income families;
- Ferris conducting walk-through energy audits for 10 middle-income families;
- Ferris hosting public education sessions, from a general public seminar on understanding energy bills and solutions for renewable energy to workshops targeted at industry professionals;
- DTE Foundation providing grant funding that will provide passes for professionals to attend the second annual Michigan Energy Conference at Ferris April 16 and 17, 2009.

Information on how to participate in the energy audits will be available by the end of January at www.ferris.edu/energy. Individuals may nominate themselves.

"This is a countywide effort that ties into sustainability efforts at Ferris to become known as the energy efficiency center of Michigan," Crandell said. "We're hoping the model we create will be replicated across the state."

Other energy efficiency efforts at the University include coursework for Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration students designed around service-learning principles. Some HVACR students participate annually in Heat the Country, which provides cleaning, servicing and replacing of furnace parts for low-income families each fall. Others, through coursework, already are conducting commercial energy audits as classroom projects, Crandell added.

The College of Engineering Technology also hosted the first Michigan Energy Conference during Spring 2008. The conference was designed to promote open dialogue on using energy effectively and efficiently to create sustainable environments at home and work.

Professor Pairs Students With Nonprofits For Service-Learning Opportunity

Volunteers are the silver lining of a cloud. They give selflessly of their time, expecting nothing in return. And, these dedicated people can be found everywhere – in the community and now in the classroom at Ferris State University through service learning.

Service learning is designed to enrich students' learning experiences by taking concepts from the classroom and applying them to real-world scenarios, said Marlene Hess, Languages and Literature adjunct instructor. Ideas written on paper become actualized into tangible results of meaningful community service. By teaching civic responsibility, service learning prepares students to strengthen the communities where they will someday live, work and raise a family, she said.

Students in Hess' English 311 technical writing class joined the effort by using the information and skills she taught them to volunteer for non-profit organizations throughout the community.

Students formed three- to five-person teams to serve five nonprofit organizations in Big Rapids. The organizations included Project Starburst, Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency, Mecosta County 4-H Program, Susan P. Wheatlake Cancer and Wellness Center, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Each group had an initial meeting with their selected organization to aid in describing the objectives to be accomplished through a written proposal. As the semester commenced, each group wrote a mid-course evaluation to determine their current progress. Additionally, the students made brochures, flyers, manuals, surveys, newsletters and other written pieces for the organization they represented. As the stated objectives were completed, each group wrote a final report addressed in a formal presentation.

Using the technical writing skills learned from coursework over the semester, one team helped Project Starburst prepare for its Christmas Drive, while another team assisted MMCAA organize its annual "Walk for Warmth." Other teams helped with the grand opening of the Susan P. Wheatlake Cancer and Wellness Center, designed and wrote materials for the local Mecosta County 4-H Program, and prepared formal primary research – of which involved writing a questionnaire, conducting a survey and analyzing the results in a report – for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Hess, a 10-year advocate of academic service learning, finds it to be a wonderful hands-on teaching methodology in which course objectives are met through applicable service in the community.





"Once the students get into their projects and see that they are fulfilling real needs in the community and writing for real audiences, they usually no longer work just for grades or the teacher," she said. "Most of the students choose to put in far more time than they would normally for a course because this work has purpose and real meaning."

Members of the participating nonprofit organizations would agree and are more than appreciative of the students' efforts.

"As with most non-profit organizations, there is not much of a budget to do marketing for our fundraising events. The students' extensive work really helped me in building awareness locally for the 'Walk for Warmth,' which allowed me to focus more on the other counties. They did a great job finding their own information and applying it to the walk," said Mark Polega, communication specialist for MMCAA. "I would absolutely love to see more involvement with academic service work in the future."

Students who were involved with MMCAA used skills developed through course work to create awareness about the "Walk for Warmth," MMCAA's largest annual fundraiser.

"Working with MMCAA put a human touch on the class work. When you are just collecting data for the sake of collecting data, it is meaningless. But when you actually meet with people and see their faces, it gives the work a more urgent need to help out," said Mark Payne of Sterling Heights, a senior majoring in Welding Engineering Technology.

"My satisfaction comes when I see the students' final performance and realize what they learned and accomplished," Hess added. "Through teamwork they were able to plan, work together and create beautiful materials for the benefit of the nonprofit organizations they served."

Faculty Highlights

Kantar's *Black November* Inspires Film

Professor of English Andrew Kantar was on hand this fall for commemorative ceremonies highlighting the 50th anniversary of the Carl D. Bradley shipwreck that included the premier of the documentary film *November Requiem*, which drew heavily upon Kantar's book about the Bradley, *Black November*.



"It was a great honor to be asked to participate in the memorial bell-ringing ceremony, 50 years after the Bradley tragedy. The experience had to be bittersweet for the families that have endured this pain for so long.

There will always be a special place in my heart for the people of Rogers City," Kantar said.

Thirty-three crew members from the Bradley died in one of Lake Michigan's worst shipping disasters. The clean, spare prose of Kantar's book captures the emotional toll of the family members left behind, and of the two men who survived the harrowing experience, for both adult and young adult readers. "On that black November night, a lake, a ship, and a town would be unhappily intertwined, forever woven into the fabric of Great Lakes lore," Kantar writes.

Drawing upon Kantar's book, the documentary brings the Bradley's story to an even wider audience. "At the premiere of *November Requiem*, I was touched when writer/director Brian Belanger told me that my book had inspired him. Brian and I had many conversations, and we both believed that this story needed to be told," Kantar said.

In addition to his writing, Kantar teaches adolescent literature, advanced scientific writing and various technical writing courses. For two years, he also served as a senior Fulbright scholar in Norway.

Mitten Uses Experiential Approach to Education

With her roots in outdoor adventure education, associate professor of Recreation, Leisure Services and Wellness Denise Mitten knows the importance of experiential education. It's been the backbone of her curriculum, as well as numerous publications by her – including her recent work editing the textbook *Theory & Practice of Experiential Education* with peers Karen Warren and TA Loeffler.

"My philosophy in teaching is similar to our founder, Woodbridge Ferris," she said. "He believed that in addition to theory people should learn through experience – a combination of theory and practice."

The pedagogy is simple: Create people that are better able to do their jobs after college. The philosophy: Help students become active citizens.

Experiential education provides real-world experiences, actual problem solving that students can expect in the work world, Mitten added.

"This goes beyond learning by doing; it is so much more than that," she said, noting experiential education is a well-rounded approach to academic success.

Mitten has used her philosophy and her passion for health and wellness to teach 30 different courses in the Recreation, Leisure Services and Wellness department. She has a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Minnesota.



Contact Information

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Editor: Leah Nixon
(231) 591-5604
leahnixon@ferris.edu

Contributing Writers: Sandy Gholston, Michelle Herron, Leah Nixon

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News Services welcomed Matt Roush from WWJ Newsradio 950 of Detroit as he travelled the state for his annual Fall Tech Tour. Visiting and talking with faculty from several departments within the College of Engineering Technology, and the College of Professional and Technological Studies, Roush featured the uniqueness of Ferris' engineering technology degrees, the Plastics and Rubber programs, Printing Management, Information Security and Intelligence, and Digital Animation and Game Design. He also learned about the University's participation as a founding member of the Green Mechanical Council. Pictured are Roush (left) and Bob Speirs, Plastics department chair.

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