

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant: Katherine Miller

Members of Team: Carrie Weis, Rankin Art Gallery Director
Grant Snyder, Humanities Department Head

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II. Event Title (25 words or less)

Love Makes a Family: Portraits of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People and Their Families.

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

Hosting this exhibit will provide evidence that Academic Affairs supports strategic goal number one ("create a University that is welcoming to diverse populations") and number four ("Create environments for student learning that are inclusive of and sensitive to a diverse student population").

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity Office's website.

The Rankin Art Gallery provides a special campus space for the University community to experience installations that address a wide range of artistic and social domains. This grant proposal seeks to bring the travelling exhibit *Love Makes a Family: Portraits of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People and Their Families* to the Rankin Gallery for one month in the fall of 2009. The primary goal of this project is to encourage conversation and exchange on the issues highlighted by this exhibit in support of Ferris' Diversity Plan's Strategic Goal One and Four: "Create a University that is welcoming to diverse populations" and "create environments for student learning that are inclusive of and sensitive to a diverse student population."

The non-profit organization and creator of the exhibit, Family Diversity Projects, explains the rationale behind this exhibit: "Love Makes a Family is a museum-quality traveling exhibit including photographs and interviews with families that have lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) members. Through first-person accounts and positive

images, this exhibit seeks to challenge and change damaging myths and stereotypes about LGBT people and their families. At the most basic level, Love Makes A Family combats homophobia by breaking silence and making the invisible visible. By encouraging people of all ages - beginning in early childhood - to affirm and appreciate diversity, this traveling rental exhibit contributes to the process of dismantling the destructive power of prejudice and intolerance, thereby making the world a safer place for all families." (<http://www.familydiv.org/lovemakesafamily.php>)

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

a. The conceptual framework that explains how the event will augment Ferris's long-term commitment to diversity.

This exhibit is designed to provoke conversations about LGBT families and the stereotypes that surround us. We have an environment on the Ferris campus where people are afraid to even write the words "gay, lesbian, bisexual" and "transgendered" on signs for meetings or in the message headings for general email announcements. Students and employees still feel empowered to use words like "fag" in public discourse settings, and both our LGBT employees and students routinely encounter harassment or dismissive innuendo. To be sure there are positive LGBT expressions on campus such as the Diverse Sexuality and Gender Alliance, our students' RSO; however, the general state of the campus with respect to LGBT people is one of need.

If we are going to address this need, I believe we have to start by providing powerful, creative frames for our discussions. This traveling exhibit is one such frame. Gay marriage has been one of the most controversial issues of the last decade, but behind that issue is the fact that—gay marriage or not—LGBT people have families, and those families have more in common with straight families than they do differences. This exhibit is about humanizing "the other" and helping people to understand that LGBT people are "people" first, with all of the hopes and dreams that every person carries.

If the exhibit is brought to Rankin, it will be among the most significant realizations of the Diversity Office's work on behalf of LGBT students and employees, a move that is fully supportive of the Diversity Office and Diversity Planning Committee's stated goals and objectives and the University's long-term commitment to diversity.

b. The goals and intended outcome(s) of the event.

1. To provide a visible evidence of the University's commitment to and support of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. To create a space on campus where students, employees, and the public can think about and discuss diversity issues surrounding LGBT people.
3. To act as a month long resource for classes that are examining issues of gender and sexual orientation.

- c. **A statement on how the event relates to the curriculum or a specific discipline, if appropriate.**

This project is broad enough in scope that it does not adhere to a specific discipline. It does however buttress core concepts in gender as provided for in the Race Ethnicity and Gender requirement in our General Education core.

- d. **A timeline.**

Early February, 2009	Reserve exhibit for fall
August 26, 2009,	Receive exhibit and start installation
September 2, 2009	Opening night of exhibit, speaker and reception.
October 1, 2009	Take down installation and ship.

- e. **Description of the target audience, including the estimated number of participants.**

All employees, students, and the community will be invited to attend an opening evening event with an aim of attracting 200+ members. Expected viewership for the exhibit based on past installation is estimated at 3000.

- f. **The expected impact that the event will have on Ferris.**

The exhibit will be the most visible LGBT themed event in the University's history. Just as with the premier of the Jim Crow Museum's two travelling exhibits, it is expected that the installation will foster conversations on LGBT issues and will raise consciousness of this minority population and its role in creating a diverse Ferris State University.

- g. **A specific plan to assess the impact of the event on the University.**

A survey will be made available to viewers to gauge their experience with the exhibit and its perceived impact. In addition, a discussion board will be created for visitors to engage in written conversation. A poster-style discussion board (as is present on 1st floor Starr Building) will be considered.

VI. **Budget**

- a. **Anticipated expenses (itemize and briefly explain).**

\$2,000.00	Rental Fee for Exhibit
\$150.00	Shipping
\$950.00	Reception/Catering/Speaker
\$75.00	Show Cards
\$250.00	Publication
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\$3425.00	Total

- b. **Funds anticipated from other sources (please list).**

At present, none.


- c. Total amount requested from Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant.
\$3425.00


VII. Final Report


A final report is required and it will appear on the Diversity Office's website. That report is due no later than three months after the funded activity. The final report should address:

- a: A self-evaluation
- b: Results of the event assessment
- c: Attendance figures
- d: Final budget

Applicants' Signatures:







Submission Date: 2-9-09

Submit applications to Patty Terryn, Diversity Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds.