

A Seat at the Table

Updates from the Diversity and Inclusion Office
January 2015

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

Welcome back to everyone.

- Spring semester at Ferris State University starts off with a time of serious reflection, joyous celebration, and great fun as we celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. with deep discussion, cultural events, movies, and a march. A preview of events organized by the MLK Planning Committee is here:
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2014/december/mlk.htm>.
- Spring semester will feature many Beyond: Diversity events and panel discussions. Major events include Minds Aflame on February 26 and a Women’s History Month event on March 24 featuring Trisha Franzen, the author of a new biography of Anna Howard Shaw.
- Work continues on the Diversity Audit. The auditors will be back to campus on February and will begin to present their findings this spring. There will be university-wide discussion about the findings and soon work will begin on a new diversity plan.
- The new University Center is a wonderful resource. There are great spaces for students to meet, study, and be social. The multipurpose room provides several different event space options. The First Lady’s Attic is now located on the first floor of the University Center. The Commuter Lounge provides a much needed space for students who come to campus for classes but live elsewhere.
- Jessica Cruz has been named Executive Director of the Center for Latin@ Studies. Jessica came to Ferris in 2012 to help create the Center and serve as Associate Director. Jessica received her Doctor of Education degree from Columbia University Teachers College in 2012.
- Tony Baker, professor of Sociology and founding director of the Center for Latin@ Studies was elected President of the Grand Rapids Board of Education. Tony has served on the Board since 2008. This is an exciting opportunity for continuing transformation and improvement at the Grand Rapids Public Schools. His biography of the Grand Rapids Public Schools website says “Since he began service on the board, Tony has also actively encouraged community/school partnerships, including encouraging his employer, Ferris State University, to invest in increasing community support for creating a college going culture. He firmly believes that the work of educating children in the district, is the responsibility of the entire community.”
- ArtWorks in Big Rapids will host Welcome to Idlewild: The Black Eden of Michigan, an exhibit that tells the story of Michigan’s role in the history of segregation and in the

development of an African-American community, from Jan. 12th through February 28th. The story of Idlewild was recently featured in the “Question of the Month” at the Jim Crow Museum website, see
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/question/nov14/index.htm>

- The Jim Crow Museum welcomes volunteers to research and write the answers featured in the “Question of the Month.” If you are interested, please contact David Pilgrim at pilgrimd@ferris.edu
- The Jim Crow Museum welcomes the addition of Michael Maxson as the new part-time docent. Michael has experience as a Local History Librarian, doing historical research, and with artifact preservation. Hiring Michael will allow the museum to expand to weekend hours in the near future. Please stop by the Jim Crow Museum and say hello to Michael.
- Jeanine Ward-Roof, Vice President for Student Affairs, discusses why it is important for Ferris State University to be a diverse institution. See
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4B0kPUWZgbM> Video produced by the Diversity and Inclusion Office.
- The Staff Center for Training and Development will conduct a session on "Creating and Maintaining a Respectful Work Culture" on February 27 from 1:00-2:00pm. The session will look at boundary setting, bullying prevention, accepting personal differences, and assertive communication skills. For more information contact Jody Gardei at 591-2112 or at <http://www.ferris.edu/sctd>
- The Diversity and Inclusion Office is developing a New Faculty and Staff Resource Guide. This resource guide is intended to provide new faculty and staff with the information necessary to make a successful transition to the Big Rapids area. Ferris State University is committed to providing employees and their families information about the wide array of entertainment, lifestyle, and recreation opportunities the area has to offer. The Guide is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/DiversityOffice/facultystaffresources/guide.htm>