



—a Ferris State international education newsletter

## The Road Ahead:

Greetings from the Office of International Education (OIE). Looking back, the Spring 2020 semester was one of the most challenging and disruptive semesters for our students and our campus at Ferris State. Thanks to technology and our ability to adapt, we were able to continue University operations, support student learning, and assist each other.

We, in the Office of International Education, were challenged in unique ways. We worked with our exchange students, who had come from our partner Universities abroad, to help them leave for their home countries. At the same time, we facilitated the return home to the US and continuation of studies for our domestic students studying abroad. We also worked with University stakeholders and various partners to coordinate efforts to ensure spring break study abroad students in Peru had a safe return home. During these efforts, we were supporting the needs of international students and addressing immediate challenges of housing, academic concerns, and life disruptions as we reconfigured our recruitment and admissions strategies and put in motion our business continuity plan to work remotely.

Former President Lyndon Johnson once said, “Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose.” The global pandemic challenges us to re-imagine our future. We, in the OIE, believe problems are opportunities in disguise for innovation. We see the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to differentiate and create more accessible and affordable global programs for students. We are synergizing our resources, bringing colleagues together, and expanding our network during these times to continue our global engagement efforts. We are pursuing the following projects in preparation for the Fall 2020 semester as we wait for the COVID crisis to resolve itself:

- 1) **Faculty Engagement:** Virtual Under the Banyan Global Conversations
- 2) **Student Engagement:** Virtual Global Engagement e-Certificate Program
- 3) **Program Development:** Facilitate Interdisciplinary Study Abroad Programs
- 4) **Enrollment Project:** Electronic recruitment of International Students

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that our world is fragile and yet resilient. Despite the difficult road ahead with divisive narratives and national-level dissonance, our collective future continues to be more inclusive and more global. Our University’s mission continues to challenge us to serve our rapidly changing global economy and society. The road ahead is full of promises, and we are preparing for it. Thanks for reading.

P.S. In our “Moment in Time” section, we are sharing great news with cute pictures. Don’t miss it!

Dr. Piram Prakasam  
Executive Director, Office of International Education



## Upcoming Events:

### Under the Banyan Virtual Conversation Series:

We will be hosting conversations with international partners, students, and alumni to learn how countries around the world are coping with the COVID-19 crisis and the reopening of economies. Please join us using this zoom link Thursday at 11 AM at URL: <https://zoom.us/j/98874271453>



## Moment In Time:



The Office of International Education family has grown by one as International Student Recruiter Jacob van Laar and his wife Nisha welcomed a baby daughter. Zohra van Laar was born on April 23rd and can't wait to see the world. She was named after her great grandmother who was also born during a pandemic in India in 1918. The name Zohra has more than one meaning, but two prominent meanings are blossom and dawn. Baby Zohra's name is fitting in her family history and in the time she was born. New life begins! We congratulate the van Laars and welcome baby Zohra!



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