



Annual Report

January 2019- June 2020

Introduction

The Ferris Women's Network (FWN) has grown significantly this year under the leadership of the new elected board. I'm proud of the progress we have made towards our goals and forecast another year of success for the FWN, despite the challenges COVID-19 has introduced.

One of the great things about the FWN is the women who volunteer their time to ensure our success. Over 50 FWN members have volunteered their time on committees, fundraiser events, and leading virtual networking sessions to support our mission. FWN has also partnered with FSU campus offices and Big Rapids community organizations through our monthly Spectrum of Opportunities Community Luncheon Series. We are living the core values of collaboration and opportunity daily. FWN also gave back to our community. At FSU, we supported the Students with Children Bulldog Bestow Christmas Program. In Big Rapids, we collected donations to support people experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault to the Women's Information Service Inc.

FWN's success in being able to fund our various program, events and initiatives was due to the success of the 2018 Women of Color Collaborative luncheon held at Ferris State University that was hosted by the FWN and from our fundraising and grant-writing efforts. We will continue to strategize how best to create financial sustainability.

Thank you for your continued support of FWN and the opportunities we provide to our community. Together we are providing women an opportunity to develop their leadership skills, develop their professional network, and grow personal and professionally while providing a sense of community.

Jody Gardei, President

Our Mission

The Ferris Women's Network advocates for the authenticity, courage, collaboration, mentorship, education, and successes of our network.

We encourage:

- strong support networks
- mentoring opportunities
- fulfillment of leadership potential
- career and personal development, and
- recognition of women's achievements



Elected Board Members for 2019-2020

President - Jody Gardei, Manager of Staff Training & Development

Vice President - Karen Simmon, Physical Plant Project Manager

Treasurer - Jennifer Yontz, Director of Annual Giving

Logistics Coordinator - Okai Strickland, Office of Housing & Residence Life Receptionist

Programs Coordinator - Karen GreenBay, Director of the Students with Children Program

Promotions, Branding, and Marketing Coordinator – Megan Biller, DCCL Assistant Director

Fundraising and Grants Coordinator - Andrea Kitomary, Student Retention Program Coordinator

Communications Coordinator – Leah Melichar, FerrisNow Outreach Coordinator

Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator – Megan Eppley, Advancement Communications Specialist

Links

FaceBook: [@FerrisWomensNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/FerrisWomensNetwork)

Website: <https://www.ferris.edu/womens-network/>



FWN Highlighted Accomplishments

This has been a record year for the Ferris Women's Network. The FWN elected board spent several months planning for the year and was successful at providing a broad array of offerings. The FWN made strides this year in creating new initiatives that demonstrated our commitment to providing professional development opportunities to women at Ferris and in the Big Rapids community. We were also able to take our new market branding image into the community, establish some strong partnerships, and to provide our members opportunities to learn about managing issues related to women's health and wellness, and finances.

- The FWN president and vice president were invited to the Women of Moxie Leadership event hosted by the Mecosta County Chamber of Commerce in February 2019. A gift basket worth \$25 was donated by the FWN to the event. The President spoke about the FWN and invited community members to join.
- Over 20 women represented Ferris at the MI ACE Women's Network annual conference in June 2019.
- The "*Be the CEO of Your Career: Developing Your Personal Board of Directors*" session was accepted for the 2019 Michigan ACE Women's Network. That presentation was facilitated by Jody Gardei, Sela Constan-Wahl, Deedee Stakley, Leah Melichar, and Ann Breitenwischer.
- The FWN held the "*Work/Life Balance Panel*" on February 28, 2019. Panelists included Dr. Jeanine Ward-Roof – Vice President of Student Affairs, Kasey Thompson – Assistant Professor in Business Administration, and Brooke Bentley – local business owner. Lunch was sponsored by Academic Affairs.
- The FWN collaborated with CLACS to offer two *AAUW Start Smart workshops* for employees and students in April 2019. The event was sponsored by the division of Student Affairs.
- A new logo and branding materials were created and approved during summer 2019.
- The FWN started the *Spectrum of Opportunities Community Luncheon Series* to enhance personal and professional development opportunities as well as to engage women in the Big Rapids community.
- Eight FWN members participated in the annual *Women of Color Collaborative Luncheon* in November 2019.
- The FWN started *Wake-up Wednesday* in November 2019 as another venue for women to network before the workday began.

FERRIS WOMEN'S NETWORK



Photo: September 2019 Kickoff Event



Photo: November 2019 Networking Lunch at The Rock Café

FERRIS WOMEN'S NETWORK



Photo: Women of Color Collaborative Luncheon, Dearborn, MI, November 2019



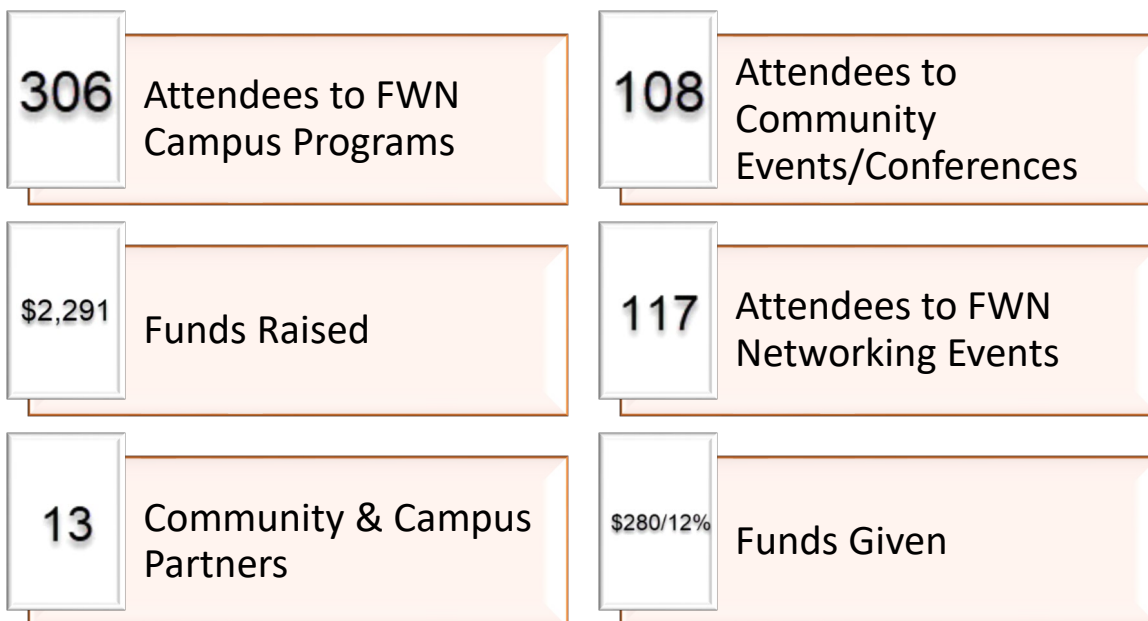
Photo: Wake-Up Wednesday Networking, February 2020



Photo: April 2020 Virtual Networking Event



FWN IMPACT



COVID-19 Response

In March 2020, the FWN moved events to a virtual format and surveyed our members on their needs during this time. We were able to make a smooth transition that allowed us to continue to serve our members needs and fulfill our mission of providing virtual networking and mentoring opportunities. Our members volunteered to host different events, and we had campus-wide participation. **Attendees: 190**



Financial Information

Grants List

Grant Secured	Amount	Purpose
Meceola Children's Counsel	\$440	Play: The Day She Left
Diversity Mini-Grant	\$1200	WOCC Luncheon – November; MLIVE Mentoring Monday

Fundraising

Events	Money Received
Bulldog Bestow Donations	\$210
Band of Locals Sales	\$471
Old Pioneer Store Sales on 11/21	10% of \$180
The Day She Left Donations for WISE	\$70

Funding and Expenditures

Beginning Balance	Operating Revenue	Operating Expenditures
\$4,633.13	\$2,179.27	\$3,187.56



Photo: Ghada Mahdi & Carrie Franklin volunteering at a FWN fundraiser in November 2019



Giving Back

We believe in supporting students at Ferris. Our members donated \$210 to Bulldog Bestow in November. This program is organized by Karen GreenBay, the Director of the Students with Children program. We also collected \$70 in donations during The Day She Left play and donated it to WISE.



Photo: FWN elected board members Leah Melichar, Okai Strickland, Megan Eppley, Jody Gardei, Karen Simmon, Jennifer Yontz, and Karen GreenBay posing in front of the gifts donated to students through the Bulldog Bestow program in November 2019

Future Goals

Due to COVID-19, the generosity of our members to volunteer their time inspired us to continue the virtual networking events and afternoon virtual trivia throughout the summer of 2020 – many hands make light work. We are fortunate to have members who want to be involved in the success of the FWN.

Planning for a virtual women's conference in February 2021 is underway. We plan to continue the popular Spectrum of Opportunities programming series that brings learning opportunities around topics of interest to our members, only this year they will be available virtually.



Closing

It is amazing how much the FWN has accomplished this year. Our loyal members and their willingness to participate and volunteer make this organization a place where important things get done! The sacrifice of their personal time to volunteer in all sorts of capacities shows that our members choose to make a difference in our community through deliberate actions.

*"We can choose to be affected by the world
or we can choose to affect the world."*

Heidi Wills

Thank you for your continued support, whether it's through funding, volunteering your time, donating to fundraisers, mentoring someone, or supporting employees who wish to stay active within the FWN. Every little thing you contribute helps to make a positive difference in the lives of others.