



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris State University to Invest in Significant Housing Improvements in Summer 2014**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release highlighting items approved by Ferris State University's Board of Trustees at its meeting on Friday, Feb. 21. Among items approved by the trustees, is a \$1.6 million investment to improve housing for student residents on the Big Rapids campus. Any media requests regarding this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

To read the online version of this story, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2014/february/trustees.htm>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 21, 2014

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**University to Invest in Significant Housing Improvements in Summer 2014**

**BIG RAPIDS** – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees approved \$1.6 million in funding for 2014-15 housing improvements at its regular meeting on Friday, Feb. 21 in the Swan Building on the Big Rapids campus.

The plan targets improvements to student residential facilities that include residence halls as well as West Campus Apartments. The upgrades will focus primarily on floor covering, lighting, painting, residence hall lobby/front desk upgrades and improved wireless Internet service. Halls scheduled for selected improvements include: Clark, Cramer, Hallisy, North and South Bond, Puterbaugh, Vandercook and Ward. Additionally, West Campus Apartments upgrades will include selected replacements of appliances, doors and furnaces.

“In our continuing effort to provide quality facilities for our residential students, the university is committed to upgrading our residential facilities,” said Jerry Scoby, vice president for Administration and Finance. “As funds become available, we’re focusing our efforts on improvements to our facilities that will better meet the expectations of and provide the best value for our student residents and the university.”

Funding for improvements will come from Housing Maintenance and Repair funds and the Capital Renewal and Deferred Maintenance initiative.

The board approved granting three honorary doctorates – James Gartner and Susan P. Wheatlake on the Big Rapids campus and Steven Kolb for Kendall College of Art and Design.

- James Gartner has been honored twice as the recipient of the Directors Guild of America Award for “Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Commercials.” He has earned hundreds of other awards, including two Emmy’s and multiple Gold Lions at Cannes. Gartner’s feature film, *Glory Road* , opened at number one in box-office receipts in 2006;
- Susan P. Wheatlake has become an effective advocate for cancer education and treatment. She has been instrumental in raising funds to establish and build cancer centers at both the Mecosta County Medical Center in Big Rapids and Reed City Hospital. These facilities were named the Susan P. Wheatlake Cancer Center in her honor; and
- Steven Kolb, chief executive officer of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, oversees all operations and activities for the designer trade association and its affiliated charitable foundation. CFDA membership consists of more than 400 of America’s leading women’s wear, men’s wear, jewelry and accessory designers.

Trustees also approved the recommendations from Ferris’ Charter Schools Office to charter six new school academies. These schools have a range of “magnet” features meant to engage students through the applied and relevant nature of their curricula.

- Detroit Delta Preparatory Academy of Social Justice, in Detroit, will stress the theme of social justice; has secured an \$800,000 four-year grant from the Michigan Futures Foundation;
- Frederick Douglass International Academy, in Ferndale, will promote cultural diversity; plans to develop collaboration with schools in Africa, Asia and South America;
- Future Leaders Academy of Michigan for Entrepreneurs, location to be determined, will focus on leadership and employability skills; also plans single-gender classrooms in core subjects areas, and utilization of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum;
- Great Lakes Anchor Academy, in Mt. Clemens, will provide a maritime-themed STEM curriculum; students will have the opportunity, if they choose, to earn rank in the U.S. Navy through the school’s partnership with the Navy’s Sea Cadet program;
- Great Lakes Explorations Academy, in Kalamazoo County, will focus on environmental curriculum and programs; proposes to utilize resources of the Kalamazoo Nature Center, Kal-Haven Trailhead and Kalamazoo River watershed; and
- Schools for the Future High School, in Detroit, will incorporate mobile technology to allow students 24/7 access to learning resources; has secured an \$800,000 four-year grant

from the Michigan Futures Foundation.

In other news, trustees approved:

- a request to move forward with the strategic space utilization study for KCAD's facilities. The study will include an inventory of existing program needs and space utilization as well as recommendations for strategic space utilization. The study will create a plan to guide future development projects in the space and become part of the future master plan of Ferris;
- the administration's recommendation to move forward with design and construction projects for the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts. When trustees voted in August to merge the UICA with KCAD, it was with the understanding that the UICA facility would require necessary completion of infrastructure on the fourth and fifth floors. The improvements are necessary to allow the UICA to successfully function and operate. At the time of the merger, KCAD purchased 2,100 square feet of unfinished retail space. This space will eventually serve as classroom and meeting space as well as space for students to work on a 24/7 basis;
- Charter Schools Office recommendations for the reauthorization of Benton Harbor Charter School, in Benton Harbor; Creative Technologies Academy, of Cedar Springs; and Hope of Detroit Academy, in Detroit;
- the CSO's recommendations for a contract extension for Bridge Academy, of Hamtramck, and the addition of pre-kindergarten for Hope Academy of Detroit; and
- 26 appointments and reappointments to the boards of directors of Ferris authorized charter schools;

The next regular full meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Friday, May 9 in Big Rapids. Board of Trustees committee meetings commence at 10 a.m.

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