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Subject: Eisler Gives State of University Address
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Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University President David Eisler's State of the University address Thursday morning during Founders' Day activities. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Eisler presents Founders' Day State of the University address

BIG RAPIDS – Change, challenge and success were a few of the key topics discussed about the past, present and future of Ferris State University by the school's top leader Thursday morning during Founders' Day activities.

In his annual State of the University address, Ferris President David Eisler talked about change, noting that in 1952 Royal manual typewriters were considered high-tech. Today, the University has a campus-wide wireless network and banks of computers to provide educational opportunities for students in such academic centers as the Ferris Library for Information, Technology and Education.

Among the physical changes to campus, Eisler discussed the renovation of the Interdisciplinary Resource Center (formerly the Instructional Resource Center), which boasts 54,700 square-feet of educational space, with an additional 6,000 square-feet of space included in a connector between the facility and College of Business.

"The renovated IRC has more learning-centered spaces throughout the facility for students," Eisler said.

Ferris also is undergoing a campus-wide, five-year classroom modernization program to provide more user-friendly and technologically up-to-date facilities that further the University's goal of creating an engaged, learning-centered atmosphere.

"So often we think about goals we set for ourselves for next month, next semester or next year," Eisler added. "Yet we need to think long-term since we are producing graduates who will have an impact upon the state – and the country – for decades to come."

Focusing on the future, the University continues to increase its scholarship funding for students to help offset the rising costs of tuition. Eisler noted that the University's ability to hold down tuition has been a major challenge in the face of budget reductions from the state, which have totaled \$11.6 million since 2002. Both individual and corporate donations to the University have helped to expand both student scholarships and educational initiatives brought forward by faculty and staff.

One of Ferris' greatest successes includes its graduates. Last May alone, the University

awarded 3,060 degrees and certificates. Chief Diversity Officer David Pilgrim, who is helping facilitate a comprehensive diversity plan, also was welcomed. This is a great step forward in better understanding each other and creating a place where everyone can teach, learn and work in a welcoming environment, Eisler said.

Eisler also stressed the importance of the University's Strategic Planning initiative. "This is an ambitious undertaking critical to making sure that we shape our own future, rather than just being at the mercy of each individual challenge that arises," he said.

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