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**Subject:** Oakland Man Creates Scholarship  
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Included below is a press release regarding Oakland resident Jeff Schmitz, a former Ferris State University football player who recently established a football scholarship at the school. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

For Immediate Release  
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### **Schmitz establishes football scholarship**

BIG RAPIDS – Jeff Schmitz has a passion for Ferris State University that has stood the test of time. As a result of that passion, and his desire to help future generations of Bulldog athletes, Schmitz has established a scholarship to turn that hope into a reality.

Schmitz, a native of Rochester Hills, first arrived at Ferris in 1991 and it was not long before the school and community left an impression on him that has followed him into adulthood. As a letter winner on the Bulldog football team (1991-95), the man who began his career by walking onto the football team truly earned his spot through hard work and perseverance. Because of his determination and the bond he established with head coach Jeff Pierce, Schmitz desired to give something back to the program and people he feel gave him so much.

“Coach Pierce had a very large impact in my life and in helping me get through college. He was very much a father figure to me,” said Schmitz, who now is the owner of Rochester Hills-based J S Capitol Construction. “There’s really no dollar value you can put on the years I spent at Ferris State University and all of those great experiences I had, but I wanted to do something to help the program, to help coach Pierce and to help other kids who want to play football at Ferris.”

After redshirting during his first season in 1991, Schmitz went on to play four years as an inside linebacker on defense. He wrapped up his career as a member of the historic 1995 Bulldog football team that finished 12-1 overall, won the former Midwest Intercollegiate Football Conference and advanced to the national semifinals before the team was defeated by a North Alabama team that went on to win the national championship. The work ethic that made Schmitz successful in football now is making him a success in the business world, according to Pierce.

“Jeff is a perfect example of a guy who has worked hard,” Pierce said. “He worked hard to become a football player in our program and he has used that same work ethic to become a success in the business world. His sponsorship of a scholarship shows the impact that our football program had on him and now he wants to create opportunities for other people to have some of those same experiences that have helped him.”

Schmitz, a Business Administration major at Ferris (B'96), is hopeful this scholarship will make the road a little easier for Bulldog football players who join Pierce's program.

"If not for coach Pierce, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish the things I've accomplished in my life," Schmitz said. "I wanted this scholarship to provide an opportunity for people who want to play college football at Ferris and for people who want to play football for coach Pierce. They've given so much to me and this is one way I wanted to give something back to them."

For more information or to make a gift to the Jeffrey S. Schmitz Football Scholarship, please contact the Ferris Foundation at (231) 591-2365 or [fsufdn@ferris.edu](mailto:fsufdn@ferris.edu). Details about establishing scholarships or endowments may be obtained from the Advancement Office at (231) 591-3825.

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