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Subject: Ferris Foundation Benefit Features Dick Vitale
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Included below is a press release regarding the Ferris Foundation for Excellence Benefit, featuring guest speaker Dick Vitale. Further information is available by calling Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Vitale hopes to inspire at Ferris Foundation Benefit

BIG RAPIDS – The name Dick Vitale has been synonymous with televised college basketball during the past 20 years as his popularity has paralleled the exponential growth of ESPN.

The man who was once a professional basketball coach with the NBA's Detroit Pistons and a college coach at the University of Detroit had his popularity soar as he stepped off the sidelines and into the broadcast booth with ESPN and ABC. In the past two decades, phrases such as "Diaper Dandy," for a talented freshman; "All-Windex Performer," for a good rebounder; "Maalox Masher," for a tightly-contested game that makes people nervous; the "Trifecta," for a 3-point shot; and the "Slam Bam Jam," for some slam dunks, have become embedded in college basketball culture.

Lending his celebrity for the evening to the Ferris Foundation, Vitale will bring his inspirational message to West Michigan to inspire people to actively participate in the Ferris Foundation and its mission of easing the financial burden for college students during the ninth annual Ferris Foundation for Excellence Benefit on Nov. 9 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids. The event helps raise funds that support the Foundation for Excellence Scholarship Endowment for Ferris students and the Exceptional Merit Grant Award program for faculty and staff initiatives that advance the University's mission.

"By attending this black tie event and by being part of this Ferris State University Foundation, you are going to allow youngsters to fulfill their dreams and do the things that they want to do in their lives because our foundation is our young people," said Vitale, who is a best-selling author of books like *Holding Court* and *Living a Dream*. "I think everybody's unique and everybody's different. I think that in every case it's obvious in today's day and world to be able to survive and exist you need an education. It opens the door."

The evening will feature guest speakers, an elegant dinner and a special presentation by Vitale. A man of boundless passion, he has received innumerable honors for his leadership and philanthropy. Vitale supports many charitable organizations and is on the board of directors of The V Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to finding a cure for cancer.

“The one thing that celebrity hood has allowed me has given me entry into situations where a normal person’s not going to get and I would feel very ashamed of myself if I didn’t utilize that in a positive way to maybe help others because I know people have helped me in my life,” Vitale said. “I’m at a stage in my life of giving back and sharing is really important to me. I am in the last chapter man and I want to make it the best and the one way to make it the best is by helping others and that’s what I have tried to do over the years.”

For more than two decades Vitale has been calling the shots on ABC and ESPN, bringing the glories of the college basketball game to viewers and listeners around the world. Additionally, he has made big-screen appearances playing himself in films such as the “Naked Gun,” “Hoop Dreams,” “Blue Chips” and “He Got Game.”

Individual tickets for the event can be purchased, or you can choose from a range of sponsorship levels. Funds raised support the Foundation for Excellence Scholarship Endowment for Ferris students and the Exceptional Merit Grant Award program for faculty and staff initiatives that advance the University's mission.

To buy tickets, reserve a sponsorship or receive additional information, call Kim Erickson at (231) 591-2365.

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