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From: Heather A Young
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2015 10:18 AM
To: Archive
Subject: PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Outstanding Graduates 2015

Included below is a press release highlighting Ferris State University's outstanding graduates for 2015. Each year, Ferris State University President David Eisler sits down with a selection of graduating seniors to learn about their lives and their college experiences. These students, nominated by faculty and staff, not only have excelled academically, but they also have overcome tremendous challenges to earn their degrees. Any media requests regarding the stories can be directed to the author Heather Young, news services communications specialist. Below, please see a list of the graduates, their majors and hometowns:

- Kaylia Ervin – Muskegon, Mich., – Bachelor's in Criminal Justice
- Samantha Fordyce – DeWitt, Mich., – Doctorate in Optometry
- Lily Hou – Beijing, China – KCAD Bachelor's in Furniture Design
- Erin Martin – Cadillac, Mich., – Bachelor's in Architecture and Sustainability
- Dai-Zhanie Plummer – Oak Park, Mich., – Bachelor's in Music Industry Management
- Alisha Standen – Clare, Mich., – Bachelor's in Medical Laboratory Sciences
- James and Rebecca Young – Big Rapids, Mich., – Bachelors' in Integrative Studies

To read the online version of this story and view photos and videos, please visit: <http://ferris.edu/HTMLS/Graduate-Stories/index.htm>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2015

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Ferris' Outstanding Graduates 2015

Each year, Ferris State University President David Eisler sits down with a selection of graduating seniors to learn about their lives and their college experiences. These students, nominated by faculty and staff, not only have excelled academically, but they also have overcome tremendous challenges to earn their degrees.

Every student has a story about the path they traveled to graduation. Among these stories are students who are the first in their families to graduate from college and are going on to pursue graduate studies; students who have excelled despite physical challenges; students who come from troubled families; student-athletes who have excelled at both academics and sport; students who manage to complete their degree with little debt working multiple jobs and earning scholarships; and students who have won major national grants and awards. Among these eight students, you will find eight different majors, dozens of student organizations and hundreds of peers impacted and inspired. Somehow they found

their way from freshmen, unsure of their major and their future, to intelligent, articulate leaders who are focused on succeeding.

Here are Ferris' 2015 Outstanding Graduates, we hope you enjoy learning about their journeys in life and their experiences at Ferris State University.

Kaylia Ervin
Bachelor's in Criminal Justice

"I saw college as a way out. I knew I had the brains to do more and I should use my God-given gifts to make a way for myself... Sadly, I am an anomaly of foster youth. Usually youth who spend time in foster care don't go to college. I'm just proud to be here standing on my own two feet. I'm going off to law school. I'm accomplishing goals one little step at a time."

Samantha Fordyce
Doctorate in Optometry

"I didn't get a lot of sleep. It was practice, study and sleep. Even in the offseason, we had 5 a.m. practice followed by another hour of conditioning. It's draining, but it's a worthwhile experience. You start to learn what you are capable of when you're a student-athlete. You learn how far you can push yourself and make yourself that much better. It's a really rewarding experience."

Lily Hou
Bachelor's in Furniture Design

"I knew very early on that I wanted to study abroad. My parents were very supportive, because they wanted me to experience different cultures and learn new things... It was hard only being able to Skype with my parents every week, but I knew I couldn't feel sorry for myself. My parents wanted me to get a good education, so I knew the most important thing was to make the most out of it and to pay them back by learning a lot here."

Erin Martin
Bachelor's in Architecture and Sustainability

"At Ferris I found a place where I fit in and where I grew as a person. I found something I'm really passionate about. I had a love for art all throughout high school, but I also have a very analytical side and I love math. I didn't want to give up either of those things, so the architecture program allows me to combine my passions."

Dai-Zhanie Plummer
Bachelor's in Music Industry Management

"There are not a lot of women in the professional field, so it's a bit of a challenge. It takes a lot to prove you're knowledgeable about the industry, you know how to use the equipment and you're knowledgeable about the business in general."

Alisha Standen
Bachelor's in Medical Laboratory Sciences

"Ferris has been great in making sure I have an interpreter and note taker during my classes... I always wanted to go to college, but Ferris helped me realize my dream."

James and Rebecca Young
Bachelors' in Integrative Studies

"It took a lot of dedication and sacrifice for both of us and our little girl. We had to get good at studying with occasional breaks to play with our little girl. Seeing us work so hard, has hopefully taught her the value of hard work and that quitting is not an option."

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