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Subject: Ferris State University Offers Disability Awareness Month Events

Included below is a press release regarding a schedule of Disability Awareness Month events on the Ferris State University campus. The first event is Monday, Oct. 5, a resource fair in the Williams Auditorium lobby.

Two five-star campus events are included; a scrimmage and exhibition basketball game Saturday, Oct. 17 in Wink Arena, featuring the Grand Rapids Pacers wheelchair team and members of the Ferris State men's and women's programs. On Wednesday, Oct. 28, Luis Montalvan, the author of "Until Tuesday" will speak in Wink Arena about his experience with a service dog helped him address his physical and psychological disability.

Any media requests regarding this release can be directed to John Smith, News Services Communications Specialist.

The photo included shows Grand Rapids Pacers wheelchair basketball players in action from a previous visit to campus.

PHOTO CAPTION: The Grand Rapids Pacers wheelchair basketball team will hold a scrimmage and play against members of the Ferris men's and women's teams Saturday, Oct. 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. in Wink Arena. The event is part of Ferris' Disability Awareness Month activities.

Read the online version of the story, here...

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2015/september/disability.htm>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 2, 2015

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(BIG RAPIDS, Mich.)-- Events throughout October on the Ferris State University campus will celebrate greater inclusivity for those with various disabilities, and provide a platform for advocates seeking increased support and services.

Disability Awareness Month activities will begin Monday, Oct. 5 with a resource fair in the Williams Auditorium lobby from 3 to 5 p.m., according to Educational Counselor Julie Alexander.

“We’re trying to raise awareness that Educational Counseling and Disability Services is here, we’re bringing in community resources,” Alexander said. “Even if a person isn’t using those services, it’s good for them to know what is out there, what kind of challenges people with disabilities might be facing.”

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Ferris History major Brittany Gwisdala will take a humorous approach to review the struggle for disability rights in her Student Speaker Series presentation, “Does ADA Matter?” The event will be held from at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 15 in IRC 120. Gwisdala will also discuss contemporary issues pertaining to disability rights.

"Disability Awareness Month is not a month of remembrance," Gwisdala said. "It is a reflection to the self, to see yourself for who you are, rather than how you're viewed in society. It is a month, like all months, where we should see the beauty in each other than complain of our challenges. It is a month of breaking our own barriers, and embracing life."

Members of the Ferris men’s and women’s basketball teams will play against the Grand Rapids Pacers wheelchair basketball team Saturday, Oct. 17 in Wink Arena. The Pacers will scrimmage to begin the five-star campus event at 5 p.m.

Communication major Katie Steadman will offer “Facing Our Discomfort” Tuesday, Oct. 20, in a Student Speaker Series presentation beginning at 11 a.m. in IRC 120. She will show several movie clips to illustrate what she sees as subtle messages about disability that exist in our culture.

A Veteran’s Resource Fair will start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28 in the lobby of Wink Arena, prior to a 7 p.m. appearance by Luis Montalvan, author of “Until Tuesday.” Alexander said the book details how Montalvan’s service dog, Tuesday, helped him deal with his physical and psychological disability.

“He has a lot to teach us, based on his own experience,” Alexander said. “He’s representing a lot of different types of people who deal with challenges. It would be my goal that people come away with a better understanding about possible misconceptions.”

There will be a book signing following Montalvan’s presentation, which is also a five-star campus event.

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