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**Subject:** Ferris Steps up to the Challenge: 125 hours for 125 years  
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### **Ferris Steps up to the Challenge: 125 hours for 125 years**

BIG RAPIDS – Volunteering gets a competitive edge as Ferris State University’s Volunteer Center kicks off the Initiative 125 Service Challenge, which runs Aug. 31, 2009 through April 23, 2010.

All Ferris students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members are challenged to reach 125 hours of service throughout the school year in celebration of Ferris’ 125th Anniversary.

Those students who complete the challenge, reaching the Woodbridge N. Ferris Level of 125 service hours, will be recognized at the Torchbearer Society Awards Ceremony and be awarded a medallion to wear at graduation.

Non-student participants will be recognized for reaching service hour milestones including the Dean’s Level of 50 service hours and President’s Level of 100 service hours.

The idea for the service challenge was brought to the attention of the Student Leadership and Activities managers by Mary Kay MacIver and Ferris’ History Task Force.

"The Initiative 125 Service Challenge is based on the belief of our founders, Woodbridge and Helen Ferris, that the world improved over time through human endeavor. This initiative provides an opportunity for Ferris faculty, staff, students, alumni and area members to honor them and our 125th anniversary by making a lasting impact in their communities as a result of their volunteer efforts," said MacIver, associate director for Advancement Services.

Challenging the entire campus to take initiative by serving the local community, Ferris continues the trend of volunteerism it started 125 years ago.

“Ferris students, faculty and staff have a great history of serving the Big Rapids community. This service challenge seems like a great way to get more people involved with it,” said Matt Valleu, a student staff member in the Office of Student Leadership & Activities and a senior majoring in Public Relations.

Ferris has a large variety of Registered Student Organizations on campus that students can join. These organizations make community service a priority to their members by finding their own ways to volunteer, even if that means creating their own service-based event.

“Volunteering teaches our students about civic responsibility. It gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment in being able to help others. It is a form of personal development. It can also help them with their communication skills and help to build their resume,” said Teresa Fogel, a student activities assistant in the Office of Student Leadership & Activities. “It gives

students an opportunity to learn about what is going on in their community and introduces them to new people, new places and new issues that you may not know ever existed.”

According to Valleu, the amount of reported community service hours has increased almost 30 percent within the past three years. He added, “This (increase) shows an overall concerted effort by all students, faculty and staff to volunteer and serve the community.”

During the 2008-09 school year, the top three RSOs reporting the most service hours were Ferris Idols, Habitat for Humanity and the Student Alumni Gold Club.

Other RSOs made memorable by their service efforts include the Red Cross Student Chapter by sponsoring blood drives, Crafters Anonymous by crocheting and sewing scarves and mittens for area agencies, and Student Government by sponsoring the Big Event.

However, individuals can feel the same sense of helping and accomplishment by volunteering on their own, too. There are many volunteer opportunities during the school year, including the ever-popular Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids Sake and the Big Event.

Other upcoming events include:

- The Big Rapids Fall Festival
- The Take Back the Night March
- Ferris Idols Snow Bowling
- Walk for Warmth
- Homecoming's People's Choice Lip Sync for United Way

For more service opportunities, visit

<http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/studentlife/activity/registration/preregistration.cfm>.



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