

For Immediate Release
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Barnum's mural to be unveiled at Grand Rapids Community College

BIG RAPIDS – “With Our Hands. . .With Our Minds,” a Robert Barnum mural celebrating the 90th anniversary of Grand Rapids Community College, will be unveiled on Wednesday, Feb. 2.

Barnum, professor and resident artist in the fine arts at Ferris State University, won a commission to create the mural in a competition held last summer. The 44.5-inch tall and 43-foot long work, named in a campus-wide contest held last fall at GRCC, was recently installed by Barnum, students and employees over a period of three days.

The volunteers registered in hour blocks of time to help Barnum pull the fabric tightly and smoothly into its location above the soon-to-be-completed Student Enrollment Center just inside the main doors of the historic Main Building. Spectators for the 6:30 p.m. unveiling will gather in the adjacent lobby.

Barnum's large and colorful mural represents the featured visual element of the anniversary observance. His work, which he began as a pencil sketch before painting the finished version, depicts notable events and faces associated with the college since it was established in 1914.

Barnum holds a master of fine arts degree in painting/printmaking from Idaho State University. He joined the Ferris faculty in 1989 and teaches a variety of fine arts studio courses, including painting, printmaking and sculpture.

He has created two striking works for the Ferris campus, the “Visionary” Triptych in the Arts and Sciences Commons, and the “Of Thought and Reason” mural in the Ferris Library for Information, Technology and Education. Barnum helped develop the Michigan Art Walk and created the Bulldog Athletic Tribute, a series of embossed sculptures that are part of the Bulldog Athletic Hall of Fame in the Ewingleben Sports Center. He has created several other pieces of public art for the University's campus and has won more than 30 awards in juried national and international fine art competitions.

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BARNUM MURAL TO BE UNVEILED – A mural by Ferris State University's Robert Barnum celebrating the 90th anniversary of Grand Rapids Community College will be unveiled on Feb. 2. Barnum, professor and resident artist at Ferris, is shown making his pencil sketch during the early stages of the project. His 43-foot long work will hang just inside the main doors of GRCC's historic Main Building.