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Subject: Grant Creates Community Partnership
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Included below is a press release regarding a grant partnering Ferris with the city of Big Rapids, DTE Energy, Mecosta County, Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce and Mid Michigan Community Action Agency. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Grant Creates Community Partnership

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University was awarded one of five grants designed to build community partnerships promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use. The \$24,896 grant partners Ferris with the city of Big Rapids, DTE Energy, Mecosta County, Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce and Mid Michigan Community Action Agency.

The grant is funded by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth but is only one of several components included in the proposal, which also includes in-kind contributions of time and resources by Ferris faculty and staff, and \$12,500 provided by the MMCAA, along with a grant award of up to \$30,000 from the DTE Foundation.

The proposal includes multiple tasks, Ferris' Director of Corporate and Professional Development Tom Crandell said, some of them including:

- MMCAA conducting energy audits for five low-income families;
- Ferris conducting walk-through energy audits for 10 middle-income families;
- Ferris hosting public education sessions, from a general public seminar on understanding energy bills and solutions for renewable energy to workshops targeted at industry professionals;
- DTE Foundation providing grant funding that will provide passes for professionals to attend the second annual Michigan Energy Conference at Ferris April 16 and 17, 2009.

Information on how to participate in the energy audits will be available by the end of January at www.ferris.edu/energy. Individuals may nominate themselves.

“This is a countywide effort that ties into sustainability efforts at Ferris to become known as the energy efficiency center of Michigan,” Crandell said. “We’re hoping the model we create will be replicated across the state.”

Other energy efficiency efforts at the university include coursework for Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning and Refrigeration students designed around service-learning principles. Some HVACR students participate annually in Heat the Country, which provides cleaning, servicing and replacing of furnace parts for low-income families each fall. Others, through coursework, already are conducting commercial energy audits as classroom projects, Crandell

added.

The College of Engineering Technology also hosted the first Michigan Energy Conference during Spring 2008. The conference was designed to promote open dialogue on using energy effectively and efficiently to create sustainable environments at home and work.

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