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Cc: [Shelly L Armstrong](#); [Archive](#); [Matthew J Eickhoff](#)
Subject: Ferris State University Nashville Star
Date: 12/14/2005 02:10 PM

Hi Dave,

I made arrangements with Candy to send you this release. I am sending it via yahoo because I know you said you have had pioneer e-mail troubles recently. Call me on my cell if you have any questions. A PHOTO WILL FOLLOW THIS E-MAIL FROM MATT YEOMAN, PHOTO SERVICES.

For Immediate Release
Dec. 14, 2005

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Ferris student aims to be the next 'Nashville Star'

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University sophomore Ashley Grutter is heading to Houston for the holidays but not to vacation.

The Music Industry Management major from Sand Lake is one of 43 semi-finalists for “Nashville Star,” the country music equivalent of “American Idol.” More than 20,000 people auditioned at one of 20 different sites around the country, trying to make the final group of 10 who will appear on the show.

“It’s kind of crazy. It’s just going so fast,” said Grutter. “My name is on Yahoo Music now and stuff like that. It’s been fun and I’m really excited about it.”

The group of 43 semi-finalists will be split into two groups to compete for the final group of 10. Grutter will be leaving on Dec. 31 to compete in the semi-final in Houston on Jan. 3 and 4. The other competition will take place in Nashville on Jan. 6 and 7. Grutter says she should know if she’ll be a finalist within a week after completion of the semi-finals.

In the first round of the “Nashville Star” competition at the Hard Rock Café in Chicago, Grutter performed Dolly Parton’s hit song “Jolene.” “I gave it my own feel, with more of an edgier sound to it,” she said. When called back the next day, she again sang “Jolene,” as well as her own song “Tatoo.” To increase her chances with the judges, Grutter also competed in Washington D.C.

Producers chose the semi-finalists from a group of about 400 who survived the initial round of competition. Now Grutter is scrambling to prepare for the semi-finals while finishing up the semester.

“I have to make this video that’s 10-minutes long about my life, my family, my friends, my school. We’re trying to figure that out while I’m studying for finals,” said Grutter. As part of the video, a group of Ferris students, faculty and staff gathered at the Rankin Student Center in support of her bid. The gathering was filmed to be part of her biographical video.

In addition to her musical achievements, Grutter recently was awarded the Student Leadership Award from Ferris' Honors program.

Grutter performs throughout west Michigan with her band Rose Colored Glasses. She also performs as a duo with her older brother, Zachery – also a Ferris student. The pair has won numerous contests, including the Grand Rapids Festival Idol contest.

Audio clips of her songs are available on her Web site, www.ashleygrutter.com.

Thanks,

Leah

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