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Subject: Conference Focuses on Energy Efficiency and Reducing Carbon Footprint
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NEWS SERVICES

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Conference Focuses on Energy Efficiency and Reducing Carbon Footprint

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University continues to be at the forefront of teaching and meeting the needs of its students and community by hosting the second Michigan Energy Conference April 16 and 17. This year’s conference will focus on energy efficiency and reducing carbon footprint.

The outcome of the conference is for participants to leave with an understanding of the carbon footprint; along with the opportunities and challenges with Michigan’s renewable portfolio and realizing sustainability through renewable resources. This includes the transmission and distribution of energy, alternative energy, energy efficiencies and solutions.

Bringing industry, government and educational leaders together to discuss our energy challenges puts Ferris in line with the State’s recent commitment to have Michigan a leader in renewable energy, said Ron McKean, associate dean of Ferris’ College of Engineering Technology. “The Energy Conference provides a forum to discuss important energy issues and foster ideas that will result in opportunities for Michigan,” McKean added.

Conference events are open to the public as well as students, teachers and faculty; and begin Thursday, April 16, with workshops during the day that include energy auditing for business owners, becoming a home energy rater, HVAC commissioning and understanding alternative fuels for transportation. The evening wraps up at Ferris’ G. Mennen Williams Auditorium with presentations by Paul Proudfoot from the Michigan Public Service Commission on Michigan’s new energy laws and initiatives, Jeff Goody from Vestas Blades of America

sharing wind energy solutions and Bill Harper from Chevron Energy Solutions on responding to our energy challenges. Student poster contest awards will also be presented.

The conference starts in earnest on Friday with keynote speakers Michele Buckler from Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber introducing carbon footprint and Stephen Hamstra from GMB Architects discussing reducing carbon footprint. The rest of the day will focus on break-out sessions covering topics on creating and delivering renewable energy, alternative energy – site solutions, and energy efficiency solutions in business and industry. There will also be special guest speaker, Stanley “Skip” Pruss, director of the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, during lunch on Friday.

The Michigan Energy Conference participation and support includes: The Association of Energy Engineers; ASHRAE; Cascade Engineering; Consumers Energy; DTE Energy, Greater Grand Rapids The Right Place, Inc. /Innovation Works; Green Mechanical Council; NextEnergy; Viessmann; West Michigan Environmental Action Council; and West Michigan Strategic Alliance, among others.

Ferris has built upon some of these partnerships and is working closely with them on other efforts, including the recent award of a grant designed to build community partnerships promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use. Ferris’ Director of Corporate and Professional Development Tom Crandell said, “This is a countywide effort that ties into sustainability efforts at Ferris to become known as the energy efficiency center of Michigan. By hosting this conference we are providing a forum for the public to understand solutions for renewable energy and offer workshops targeted at industry professionals.”

The first Michigan Energy Conference held in 2008 had more than 200 business and community leaders, faculty and students; and was highlighted with a speech from Grand Rapids businessman Dick DeVos. “We are planning for even larger attendance this year,” said Debra Fisher, Michigan Energy Conference committee member.

For more information, admission pricing, or to register for the Michigan Energy Conference, visit www.ferris.edu/mec.

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