



Included below is a press release regarding a prestigious award won by Ferris State University student John Vestevich, a cartoonist for the Ferris State Torch, the student newspaper. Vestevich was named the nation's top cartoonist in 2010 by The Scripps Howard Foundation. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services. A lower-resolution courtesy photo from John Vestevich is attached below.

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Vestevich Wins Charles Schulz Award from Scripps Howard Foundation

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University student John Vestevich has been drawing comics his entire life, but even he was surprised to learn his artwork was honored recently with the Charles M. Schulz Award and a cash prize by The Scripps Howard Foundation as part of its National Journalism Awards.

Vestevich, who has been working for the *Ferris State Torch* student newspaper since September 2010, was named the nation's top college cartoonist in 2010 by The Scripps Howard Foundation for "humorous commentary through traditional editorial cartoons."

"Winning the award is a huge honor," said Vestevich, a second-year Graphic Design major from Bloomfield Hills. "The reality and implications of winning have yet to fully hit me since I was not at all expecting to win. I'm not even sure what this means for my work and future career, but I can say that this is my first real accomplishment and I am very proud of it."

A 27-year-old non-traditional student at Ferris, Vestevich previously earned a Bachelor of Arts in Finance from Michigan State University in 2006. He then spent a year in Detroit in an effort to publish a comic book. He later moved to Chicago and started another comic project as he worked several hourly jobs. It was around that time he decided to turn his life in a new direction and Ferris became his school of opportunity. He made the decision to enroll at Ferris for the Fall 2009 semester in the school's Graphic Design program to develop his passion in his talents.

Returning to school, as a non-traditional student, was an opportunity for Vestevich to explore and develop his childhood passion for comics.

"I've been drawing comics my entire life and I have a lot of experience making traditional comic books," he said. "My experience with humorous comics is relatively limited, however. I started

working for the *Torch* in September 2010 and since then I've gotten comfortable with the medium and have found my voice, so to speak."

Vestevich's work and recognition from The Scripps Howard Foundation have been applauded by those affiliated with the *Ferris State Torch* .

"I couldn't be more proud of John. We've been aware of his talent on the *Torch* staff all year. However, talent is not always rewarded," said Steve Fox, an assistant professor of English and Journalism in the College of Arts and Sciences and advisor for the *Ferris State Torch* . "This is fantastic for him and his future. It's clear affirmation that he is extremely gifted."

Fox sees Vestevich as having the talent to be an editorial cartoonist.

"Editorial cartoons are best when they are visually appealing, smart and original," Fox said. "John has the ability to put all those things together on a regular basis. Like his messages or not, he's always got a lot to say in a small amount of space and it's clearly done at a professional level."

Vestevich thinks of himself as a storyteller who in many ways is a visual voice for fellow students through his thought-provoking cartoons.

"Every cartoon I make for the *Torch* is based in some way on a personal experience," he said. "My goal is to satirize the identity and experiences of college students, especially in terms of the impression that they give to the rest of the world."

Fox noted that traditionally this award has been presented to cartoonists from some of the nation's biggest schools.

"The fact that it is given out by an organization that employs some of the nation's top syndicated cartoonists is the kind of connection that can make a career," Fox said. "Past winners of this award hail from the likes of Kent State, University of Missouri, Wake Forest and the University of Michigan. This is really legit and John totally deserves it."

The award winners are scheduled to be honored at a dinner set for May 3 hosted by the Scripps Howard Foundation and its corporate founder, The E.W. Scripps Company, at the Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinnati. The winners will receive a total of \$185,000 in the 18 categories.

The official press release from The Scripps Howard Foundation can be accessed here:
<http://pressreleases.scripps.com/release/1198>

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John_Vestevich_Drawing.jpg

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