



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Students Ready to Keep The Big Event Community Service Tradition Alive**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

04/05/2011 05:37 PM

From: Sandy C Gholston/FSU

To: Archive/FSU@FERRIS

Included below is a press release regarding the upcoming large-scale community service student project, The Big Event. Ferris State University students will be out in the Big Rapids community engaging in a massive community service project to spread goodwill in the community and to engage their neighbors in Big Rapids. Any questions about this press release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services.

For Immediate Release  
April 5, 2011

Sandy Gholston  
Ferris State University  
Interim Assistant Director of News Services  
sandygholston@ferris.edu, (231) 591-2021

**Ferris Students Ready to Keep The Big Event Community Service Tradition Alive**

BIG RAPIDS – The Big Event has become a big tradition for Ferris State University students since 2008, and that tradition remains alive and well.

On Saturday, April 9, Ferris students will engage in The Big Event – an outreach effort with a few goals in mind: give back to the Big Rapids community, help clean their home away from home, and bridge the gap between the campus and local communities. As part of that effort, Ferris junior Danielle Balmer, director of The Big Event and vice president of Student Government, noted that more than 1,500 of her fellow students have volunteered and more than 200 local residences have been submitted and identified for work.

The Big Event volunteers will meet on Ferris' Campus Quad at 9 a.m. for a light breakfast that includes coffee and donuts. Student volunteers then receive a free T-shirt, courtesy of a sponsorship deal with Campus T-Shirts, and learn their specific job assignment as well as collect the tools and items they will need. The Big Event is scheduled to run until 2 p.m.

For the students, however, the time spent engaging the people of Big Rapids, as part of this large-scale community service project, is well worth the time and effort.

“Through our work with The Big Event, we, as students, want to say ‘thank you’ to our neighbors in the Big Rapids community through this gesture of community service and goodwill,” said Balmer, a Resort Management major and a native of Columbia, Mo. “We as students to Ferris and to Big Rapids and this becomes our home away from home and we want to do things that help give something back to the community that is our home while we’re in

college.”

In 2008, 200 students volunteered for 20 houses; in 2009, the number expanded to 50 houses and 200 student volunteers; and, in 2010, The Big Event boasted 1,194 students and more than 200 houses. Balmer has been pleased with the growth in student participation The Big Event has enjoyed since its inaugural year on campus in 2008.

“It has been exciting to see the number of students we’ve had become so energetic and enthusiastic about The Big Event and volunteering in the community,” she said. “Because Big Rapids is a small and close-knit community, there can be times where students are living as neighbors with members of the community and as neighbors even with faculty and staff at Ferris. This is a way for everyone to get to know each other better and to strengthen those relationships.”

Sponsors for The Big Event of 2011 include Lowes, Meijer, The Pioneer Group, Menards, the division of Student Affairs, the division of Academic Affairs, the College of Arts and Sciences, Dining Services, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Physical Plant, Isabella Bank, Biggby, Y102-WYBR, Bernie’s Doughnuts, Dominos Pizza, Buffalo Wild Wings, University Advancement and Marketing, and Campus T-Shirts. Event organizers also highlighted support from Big Rapids Mayor Mark Warba and the city-wide organizations in Big Rapids.

Balmer noted that more than 130 Ferris student organizations are involved in The Big Event to generate more than 7,500 hours of community service.

For more information about The Big Event, check out the website at <http://bigevent.ferris.edu/>

- 30 -

Sandy Gholston  
Interim Assistant Director of News Services/Social Media PR  
Ferris State University  
420 Oak Street  
Prakken Building 108  
Phone: (231) 591-2021  
News Services Web site: [www.ferris.edu/news](http://www.ferris.edu/news)  
Ferris State University News Blog: [ferrisstatebulldogs.blogspot.com/](http://ferrisstatebulldogs.blogspot.com/)  
Ferris State Live: [ferrisstate.tv/ferrisstatelive.html](http://ferrisstate.tv/ferrisstatelive.html)

This message may contain confidential and/or proprietary information and is intended for the person/entity to which it was originally addressed. Any use by others is strictly prohibited.