

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 30, 2012

Award Recipients

It was a pleasure to see the strong attendance at the Employee Service Award Celebration when we recognized exceptional achievement and service to the University. Please join me in congratulating these outstanding faculty and staff who were recognized on Wednesday.

- Distinguished Teacher Awardee - Clifton Franklund
- Distinguished Staff Awardees - Nick Campau, Deb Ducat, Bryan Marquardt
- Academic Scholar Awardee - Kim Colvert
- Adjunct Teaching Excellence Awardee - Nell Hill
- Distinguished Service Awardee - John Schmidt
- Diversity Enhancement Awardee - Mike Berghoef
- Outstanding Academic Advisor Awardee - Christine Vonder Haar
- RSO Advisor of the Year Awardee - Laura Dix
- Opportunity 125 Awardee - Tracy Powers

Additionally faculty receiving promotion, merit and tenure were recognized.

We are fortunate to have a university community with dedicated faculty and staff members. Thank you to everyone who invested time and energy in choosing this year's awardees from among so many deserving nominees.

Federal Building

Tuesday is the preview of the Federal Building and is timed to coincide with the opening of the Kendall student art show. There will be a brief program in the Federal Building at 4 p.m. at which President Oliver Evans will welcome people to the Federal Building. Oliver will also introduce the next president of Kendall College, Dr. David Rosen, who will be present. There will be a more formal and official opening of the Federal Building before ArtPrize this September.

Many of you may have attended the Kendall student art show in the past. As part of this faculty choose the outstanding student from each artistic area. These are known as the Studio Excellence Award winners. This year their work will be displayed in the first floor galleries of the Federal Building. It seems to me an appropriate way to first use the building to display the work of outstanding students. With the exception of the sculpture park on the Division Street side the Federal Building is completed and the construction trailer has been removed. As part of the Kendall art show the building will be available for tours throughout the week. It will then close for the summer as the furniture is installed and faculty and staff move into the building to prepare it for classes in the fall.

For the Kendall student art show, in addition to the Studio Excellence Award winners, the entire Kendall building is turned into an enormous art gallery with seven plus floors of student art displayed in the classrooms and hallways. If you attend the soft opening Tuesday I would encourage you to take some time and tour the Kendall building also.

Alumni Awards and Alumni Spring Reunion

The annual Ferris Alumni Spring Reunion Banquet will take place this Thursday, May 3, at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center. The Ferris class of 1962 will be honored and inducted into the Society of Golden Eagles. The Alumni Association will also honor the Distinguished Alumni Class of 2012, and the winners of the Pacesetter Award. The recipients of this year's awards are:

Distinguished Alumni

- Karl Huffman, President of Hedrick Associates in Grand Rapids
- Judge Ronald C. Nichols of the 49th Circuit Court
- Col. George Nicolas, Jr., Director of the Biomedical Sciences Corps and Chief of the Senior Leader Management Division of the Force Management Directorate, Office of the Surgeon General
- Terrence L. Rollins, Defense Logistics Agency Site Installation Energy Manager, Defense Logistics Agency, Philadelphia, Penn.
- Hazel H. Seaba, Associate Dean for assessment, curriculum and compliance at the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy, and Professor in pharmacy and international programs
- Chief Teresa Szymanski of the Lansing Police Department

Pacesetters

- David J. Cox, Director of Career and Technical Education at Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District in Cadillac
- Recco S. Richardson, mental health professional providing services through Flint-based Richardson Consulting
- Jessica Wortley Adler, Internal Communications/External Relations Specialist for Lansing-based Emergent BioSolutions

Commencement

Spring Commencement will mark an important milestone with more than 1,700 students scheduled to receive degrees from our University on Friday, May 4, in Big Rapids, and Saturday, May 5 in Big Rapids and Grand Rapids. Commencement is the culminating event of the academic year, and the most tangible expression of the positive difference we strive to make in the lives of each and every student who comes to Ferris State University.

Three honorary doctorate recipients will address our class of 2012 graduates: alumnae JoLaine Draugalis, dean of the College of Pharmacy at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center; alumnus Brent Knight, president of Lansing Community College; and social entrepreneur Rick DeVos of Grand Rapids. I will be sharing some special stories of students who have overcome challenges and demonstrated extraordinary achievement.

Many faculty and staff work very hard on Commencement, earning them this year's Distinguished Team Award. Each ceremony provides a moment that our graduates will remember their entire lives. Making Commencement the best possible experience for our newest alumni and their families is an important and fitting conclusion to their education at Ferris.

More information about the ceremonies is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/current/commencement/>. Live streaming of Commencement will also be available through that link.

Student Debt and Time to Degree

I want to thank everyone who has participated in our discussions and considerations of student debt and time to degree completion. Student debt has recently been in the news as Congress moved to continue the reduced interest rate for federal student loans.

If you take a moment to look at the material that has been amassed so far, there are many excellent ideas and suggestions here. In the fall I look forward to working with you in choosing the most promising ideas and moving forward with initiatives that can make a difference for our students.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to review the suggestions that have been so far put forward, you can access them along with some helpful links about these topics at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/planning/studentdebt.htm> . As you consider these materials I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on them.

Athletic Success

The extraordinary success of our Ferris athletic teams continues. This week the women's track and field team is ranked 17th in the nation. They will participate in the GLIAC Outdoor Championships May 3-5. Congratulations to our women and their coach Steve Picucci.

Our men's golf team has received an invitation to the NCAA regional golf championship, the 10th consecutive year they will have participated. Together with 10 teams from the Midwest and 10 teams from the South Central regions, they will compete in Jefferson City, Mo., May 7-9. Congratulations to our men's golfers and their coach, Mike Mignano.

Our women's softball team had much success at this weekend's GLIAC championships in Findlay, Ohio, defeating Ohio Dominican and then top-ranked Grand Valley State University twice to advance to the title round, where they fell just short to Wayne State 3-2 in a close Sunday morning contest. Congratulations to our women's softball team and their coach Dawn Thompson.

End of Semester

Thank you for all of your hard work this past year. This has been a time marked by great success at Ferris State University. For the first time in our University's history we have received full 10-year accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission without conditions or follow-up. A number of building projects are now completed, including the Jim Crow Museum, the new Pharmacy Center at 25 Michigan in Grand Rapids and the renovated Federal Building. We have enjoyed unprecedented national attention and recognition from the success of our hockey team and the Jim Crow Museum opening. Most importantly, we have helped thousands of students receive career-building and life-changing education. This list of accomplishments could go on for many more pages.

During the summer I am hopeful you will have the opportunity to spend time with friends and family, travel or simply relax. I look forward to working with you as we continue build a great university and help our students succeed in the months and years ahead.

Thank you so very much.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president