

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
January 30, 2012

Festival of the Arts

This evening is the opening ceremony for the 2012 Festival of the Arts. This reception takes place 7-9 p.m. at Artworks in downtown Big Rapids. The event features Winifred Godfrey and her paintings, "Mayan Procession" and Linda Stephen's Origami Art College. Their work will be on display at Artworks through Feb. 25.

There truly is something for everyone at the Festival of the Arts. This week's exhibits are a great example -

Tuesday

- Margo Berke, presents a Sprig Tile Workshop

Wednesday

- Bob Patterson presents "A Night in the Tropics," flower arranging
- Big Rapids High School students perform a vocal solo and ensemble concert
- Sonny Wilkinson and Ron Newman present an "Evening of Jazz" in the Dome Room
- The American Institute of Architects 2011 Institute Honor Exhibit opens in the University Art Gallery

Thursday

- Jim Stock presents "Seeing Through Architecture" in the Optometry Building

Friday

"Out of the Blue" performs a Bluegrass Gospel Concert in the Crossroads Charter Academy Auditorium Saturday

- Adriana Mallett presents a Wee Wonders Pre-K Art Workshop
- The Mariachi Nacional Band will present halftime concerts at the Ferris basketball games and then an evening concert at the Crossroads Auditorium
- Ted Evans will present an On-site Sculpture Construction Demonstration in our Heavy Equipment Center
- The Foreign Film Festival shows "Queen to Play" in the IRC

Sunday

- "Expressions of Faith" Liturgical Dance Workshop at the Crossroads Auditorium
- Sylvia Norris performs a Harp Recital in the United Church

And this is just the first week. There are more than 70 events scheduled during this year's Festival. As you can see, events cover a truly wide range, engaging artists from our community and guest artists including the Grand Rapids Symphony. Most of the Festival's events are free and open to the public. Besides attending yourself I am hopeful you will encourage your family, friends and students to attend an event of interest and perhaps experience something new.

We all want to thank Festival of the Arts Co-Chairs Carrie Weis and Ed Mallett, and executive board members Scott Cohen, Jerena Keyes, Steve Sobers and Trinity Williams, as well as immediate past chair Bruce Dilg. Visit <http://www.ferris.edu/festival/> for a complete schedule of events and other information about the Festival. I know of no other community our size that

enjoys such a spectacular series of events. The Festival of Arts truly is a wonderful celebration of the arts and our community.

Testimony to Senate Education Committee

Last Wednesday I testified to the Michigan Senate Education Committee regarding proposed legislation that would allow community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees. In my testimony I raised a number of issues that argue against expanding the number of institutions in the state that grant four-year degrees. These include a decline in public school enrollment in the state since 2002, the cost to taxpayers for the faculty and equipment to start new programs, and the very great likelihood that funding for an expansion of four-year degrees will require the state to divert resources from existing universities and/or necessitate community colleges to increase tuition.

In my remarks I also took the opportunity to tell the committee members about the vital partnerships Ferris has with community colleges across the state to increase access to four-year programs through site-based programs. I reiterated our desire to meet community college needs for bachelor degrees through additional partnerships.

This is an important issue for the state and for our students. You are well aware of the decline in state funding for higher education over the past several decades. Should this legislation pass, I believe that programs in more areas will be added. Imaging the state's already thinly spread resources having to cover even more four-year programs is not a pleasant prospect.

My prepared remarks and slides from my testimony are available at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/presentations/2011-2012/> . Additional testimony from this session is accessible here - <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/committees/Default.aspx?commid=51> . I will keep you updated on any new developments regarding this legislation.

Athletic Success

What a weekend for Ferris Athletics! Our women's basketball team captured its seventh straight win with a 58-50 win over Grand Valley. The men's basketball team followed with a 65-57 win, also over the Lakers. On Friday and Saturday evenings our men's ice hockey team beat Michigan State 2-1 and 4-3 to continue an eight-game unbeaten streak. **With that all three teams, women's basketball, men's basketball, and men's ice hockey are all in first place in the conference standings.** Congratulations to coaches Tracey Dorow, Bill Sall, Bob Daniels and our men's and women's student-athletes on this outstanding success!

The Basketball teams will next be in action at home Thursday evening against Lake Superior with games at 6 and 8 p.m and then on Saturday vs. Saginaw Valley at 1 and 3 pm. Hockey travels to Northern Michigan for games next weekend. Both hockey games were sold out over the weekend. Thank you for supporting Ferris Athletics.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president