

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 14, 2011

Global Entrepreneurship Week

Beginning today Ferris State University is taking part in Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), an international effort to stress the importance of the entrepreneurial spirit and foster the next generation of entrepreneurs. In a proclamation declaring November National Entrepreneurship Month, President Obama said, "By cultivating innovation on our college and university campuses, we can inspire the next generation of entrepreneurial leaders."

GEW is an opportunity to highlight some of the developments taking place here at Ferris, thanks in large part to the leadership of our faculty. Local events are being sponsored by Ferris' Entrepreneurship Institute and the Ferris chapter of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization. Recently launched and headed by College of Business faculty member, Dr. Shirish Grover, the Entrepreneurship Institute seeks to -

- Act as a resource center for aggregating and disseminating information related to entrepreneurship
- Develop a curriculum that meets the needs of both potential and existing entrepreneurs
- Create an Entrepreneurial Incubator that helps entrepreneurs and facilitates their success

This week's events will take place both in Big Rapids and Grand Rapids -

- Monday, Michael Suman, Ferris alumnus and owner of Product and Market Development, will discuss "Launching Your Invention" in IRC 120, 5-6 p.m.
- Tuesday, Keith Brophy, CEO of IdeoMed will speak on "The Secret Energies of Entrepreneurial Empowerment," IRC 120, 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, there is a video competition to pitch your best business idea, IRC 120, 6 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 17, Michael H. Price, chairman, CEO and Director of Mercantile Bank will speak on "Entrepreneurial Empowerment Exemplified" at Mercantile Bank, 310 Leonard St. NW in Grand Rapids, 6 p.m., meet and greet at 5:30 p.m.

More information on Global Entrepreneurial Week is available at

<http://www.ferris.edu/eio/gew/>

Budget Forum

This week I will hold a budget forum to provide an update on state and national issues that may impact on our finances. I am hopeful you will join me on Thursday, Nov. 17, at 11 a.m., in the Rankin Centennial Room. These past few years have been a time of unprecedented change in how and to what level Michigan funds higher education. This is the first of several sessions I will present this year as part of continuing conversation about higher education funding and Ferris State University.

In addition to the state and national outlook, I look forward to sharing with you information on the University budget, net assets, the outlook for future funding and other issues. I also look forward to visiting with you and hearing your questions on these matters of critical concern to our University community and our collective future.

Construction Projects Update

Ferris is currently involved in three construction projects. These efforts, which will be completed in the next six months, touch a variety of academic efforts both in Grand Rapids and Big Rapids. They also represent the wide range of our academic offerings and our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of a growing University.

Pharmacy Facility at 25 Michigan Avenue

In January, third- year Pharmacy students will be brought together in one location, a new facility in the heart of Grand Rapids' "Medical Mile." Construction is nearly completed on this facility, which comprises the 7th floor of the medical building located at 25 Michigan Avenue in Grand Rapids. This space contains classrooms, a computer laboratory, office space for faculty and staff, a student lounge and conference rooms. Most importantly, its proximity to the VanAndel Institute, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, Lemmon-Holton Cancer Pavilion, Meijer Heart Center, and all of the Spectrum Hospital facilities creates new and exciting opportunities for collaboration.

The 25 Michigan Ave. space, plus an article about the College of Pharmacy's work with Cherry Street Health Services in Grand Rapids, is featured in the fall issue of *Ferris Magazine* available online at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/alumni/ferrismagazine/index.htm> . Friday, February 3rd is planned as an open house and celebration of this space.

Federal Building

Our renovation of the historic Federal Building in Grand Rapids is on track for completion in March of 2012. The new classrooms, exhibition space, student areas, and offices that the former Federal Building will provide are much needed because of Kendall College of Art and Design's growth over this past decade. From putting together a private-public partnership to funding the renovation, to maintaining the building's historic integrity, this project has been a remarkable challenge.

When completed the building will be a major addition to Ferris' presence in Grand Rapids, creating three contiguous blocks constituted by Kendall's current building, the former Federal Building and student housing at 5 Lyon. At the recent Ferris Foundation gala I had the opportunity to discuss this project and share some images of its progress. Notes from my remarks along with the slideshow are available at

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/presentations/2011-2012/> .

Jim Crow Museum

Ferris State University is home to a remarkable collection of artifacts that chronicles the cultural and political journey of African Americans in this country. The collection is the result of the lifelong efforts of museum founder and Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, David Pilgrim. Totalling more than 9,000 items, the Jim Crow Museum is a powerful tool for teaching understanding and tolerance. The current home of the Jim Crow Museum, a single room in the Starr Building, has been a wonderful resource in helping promote our diversity and educational efforts. But the limited size of this space has restricted displays, the number of visitors accommodated, and other potential activities of the Museum.

With the help of a lead grant from the DTE Foundation, we are constructing a more suitable home for the JCM that will make the collection an even more valuable resource for Ferris students, researchers and visitors. The Jim Crow Museum's new home will be on the lower level of the Ferris Library for Instruction, Technology and Education and is scheduled for completion by April. This new space will allow much greater access to the collection and place these items in context through signage, audio-visual aids and presentations. In addition to the physical artifacts of the JCM, the museum's website is also an important resource for students and researchers. In response to a letter to the Museum, Dr. Pilgrim spells out in greater detail the resources the new facility will be able to offer visitors. The letter and his response are available at <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/question/nov11/>.

Projects such as this that re-purpose existing space can be disruptive for those who work, or regularly use areas nearby. I want to thank the faculty, staff and students who work, teach and study in FLITE for their patience during this transitional period.

Athletics Success

This has been an extraordinary season for our women's volleyball squad. The team has already captured the regular-season conference championship and finished second in this weekend's conference tournament. The team has a record of 26-3 and is ranked 12th in the nation. With the team's win in the conference quarter finals over Wayne State, Coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm earned her 331st victory. This is the most wins by any Ferris volleyball coach in history. Our team is next in action on Friday when they will take on Saginaw Valley in the NCAA Midwest Regional tournament at Hillsdale College.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President