



**PRESS RELEASE: The Ferris Foundation Awards Six Grants to Faculty , Staff**  
**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding the announcement of The Ferris Foundation's Exceptional Merit Grant Awards for the 2012-13 academic year to Ferris State University faculty and staff. The grants are awarded to seeking to pursue initiatives that advance student learning and faculty engagement. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

To read the online version of this story, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/june/merit.htm>

For Immediate Release  
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### **The Ferris Foundation Awards Six Grants to Faculty, Staff**

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris Foundation Board of Directors has extended \$37,000 in Exceptional Merit Grant Awards to six faculty and staff members for proposals designed to advance the Ferris State University goals of engagement and learning.

“It is our pleasure to support faculty grants and further the mission of the university,” said Joseph Mikols, a member of the foundation’s board of directors and chair of its Gifts and Grants Committee.

The following proposals will receive a portion of the funding during the 2012-13 academic year:

- **David Baker, department chair, Ferris Grand Rapids Digital Animation and Game Design**

Baker’s proposal was for “Northern Bend,” an immersive, interactive environment that will be part of the “Shipwreck” exhibit at the Grand Rapids Public Museum. The widescreen computer simulation of a 1900s-era Lake Michigan Steamer is designed to be a learning tool that teaches about Michigan history and culture and also to promote Ferris’ Digital Animation and Game Design program.

- **Arn McIntyre, Michigan Energy Center director, College of Engineering Technology**

McIntyre’s proposal was for home energy analysis community outreach. The project will involve students reaching out to the community to provide a home energy audit. The intent is

to utilize the knowledge base of Ferris and the CET to progress energy initiatives through education, research and outreach.

- **Christopher Westerkamp, associate professor of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences**

Westerkamp's proposal focused on reliability and prediction of field tests for lactate threshold in trained distance runners, a research opportunity for students. Equipment purchased with this grant will enhance a new laboratory course and existing biology laboratory courses.

- **Sgt. James Wing, Department of Public Safety**

Wing's proposal was for equipment to support the Rape Aggression Defense program. The program provides realistic, self-defense tactics and techniques for women that begin with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance while progressing on to educated decisions about resistance. The class is offered twice each semester.

- **Bonnie Wright, associate professor of Sociology, College of Arts and Sciences**

Wright's proposal was for integrating peer interaction and community collaboration into online learning. The proposal will create a series of 12 videos to enhance online learning for an Introduction to Sociology class. Videos of students experiencing sociology will create an impromptu peer dynamic and offer the experience of collaboration with external institutions that is missing in traditional online education.

- **Changqi Zhu, assistant professor of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences**

Zhu's proposal was for Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms of Activin Signaling Regulated Aging Process in *Drosophila melanogaster*, a project that provides opportunities for students to develop hands-on research experiences that can help them be better prepared for their future careers.

The Gifts and Grants Committee develops policies and procedures, and recommends additional resources for Exceptional Merit Grants and Foundation for Excellence Scholarships.

The committee also monitors scholarship awards for compliance with donor specifications, recommends and monitors grant disbursement, and recommends student scholarship recipients for the Foundation Scholarship.

For more information or to make a gift to Ferris, please contact The Ferris Foundation at (231) 591-2365 or visit [www.ferris.edu/foundation](http://www.ferris.edu/foundation). Details about establishing scholarships or endowments may be obtained from the Advancement Office at (231) 591-3825.

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