

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
September 29, 2008

Optometry Building

It is a pleasure to report that Ferris is closer than ever to securing funding for a new optometry building. Last Thursday the Michigan legislature passed a capital outlay budget, which includes an appropriation of \$20,175,000 for this \$26.9 million facility. The measure now needs signing by Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who has signaled her support.

This progress is a result of the concerted efforts of our legislators, Sen. Michelle McManus and Rep. Darwin Booher. From her leadership position on the joint capital outlay committee, and as chair of the conference committee, Sen. McManus has been critical in guiding this proposal; and as a member of the outlay committee Rep. Booher has worked throughout to move this project forward. On behalf of the entire University, I want to thank Sen. McManus and Rep. Booher for their support. Our proposal was fortunate to enjoy the support of both the House and Senate Appropriation chairs, Rep. George Cushingberry and Sen. Ron Jelinek, as well as the current Joint Capital Outlay Committee Chair, Morris Hood III.

Our optometry faculty has worked more than a decade to make this dream a reality and I congratulate them on this success. In this effort they actively engaged the help of the Michigan Optometric Association, and the MOA made this their highest legislative priority. These combined efforts were critical to advancing this project. Optometry faculty member Dr. Mark Swan is the current president of the MOA, and has testified with me before the legislature, stressing that it would be impossible to serve client needs and expand the program without this new facility.

In addition to a \$1 million gift from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, more than \$1.25 million in donor contributions have been raised for this state-of-the art facility. As the only college of optometry in Michigan and one of just 18 in the country, this new facility will greatly enhance MCO's ability to educate optometrists and provide access to the highest quality eye care.

We have already funded and completed the programming phase for what will become the Michigan College of Optometry's Center for Collaborative Healthcare Education. We look forward to beginning construction on the MCO's new home as soon as possible after Gov. Granholm signs the legislation. This is very, very good news not only for Ferris, but for the optometry profession and patients throughout Michigan, the Midwest and the nation as a whole.

Strategic Planning and Resource Council

As part of the University's Strategic Planning process, last year the Strategic Planning and Resource Council was created. This group includes a faculty member from each college, staff members, the chair of the Academic Senate, the president of the Student Government Association, the AFSCME, CTA and FFA presidents, and members of the administration. SPARC is led by Professor Robert von der Osten and has been instrumental in the creation of our

Strategic Plan. It now is guiding and monitoring our progress on pursuing the goals and implementing the initiatives of the Strategic Plan.

SPARC meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 3-5 p.m. in the Rankin Center Founders' Room. These meetings are open to the public and you are invited to attend. This month's agenda includes the addition of a new strategic initiative regarding the development and implementation of a plan for the growth of Ferris' online and multi-site presence. We received very good input about this potential new initiative during a stakeholders meeting these past two weeks. Presentation and discussion will include initiatives on a Comprehensive Capital Campaign (Initiative 3.1), Emergency Management (4.5), and a sustainable solution to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning problems in the Arts and Sciences complex (3.3 and 4.6).

More information on SPARC, the Strategic Plan, and discussion notes of these meetings is accessible at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/sparc> . As has been true throughout our Strategic Planning process, I am heartened by the level of involvement by a large cross-section of the University community.

Campus Activities

If you have not been using the Campus Calendar on the Ferris home Web page or the Things to Do at FSU on the University Life tab of MyFSU, I encourage you to do so. In October alone, there are listings for more than 150 different events. These include meetings by student groups, outings, athletic contests and cultural events. A few of the highlights for October in Big Rapids include a production of "The Comedy of Errors;" a presentation by Emmy Award-winning comedy writer Alan Zweibel; the 2008 annual Fulbright lecture with Israeli political scientist Dr. Eran Halperin; and a production of the musical "City of Angels." These are in addition to the many Homecoming activities we have planned.

Many of these events are free and some – such as shows at the Rankin Art Gallery or Kendall Gallery – can be viewed at your convenience. Please check these listings regularly and help us continue to build a vibrant campus community by attending the many events that University organizations make possible.

Good News

There are many, many good news stories about our faculty, staff, students, and programs. I try to collect these and make them available off our University Web page. The most recent list of these is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/goodnews.htm> . Congratulations to Coach Jeff Pierce and our football team for a thrilling victory over Northern Michigan University on Saturday.

Among upcoming items, our News Services will welcome Matt Roush from WWJ 950 Newsradio of Detroit as he brings his Fall Tech Tour to Ferris Oct. 7. Roush spearheads the Great Lakes IT Report, a daily IT newsletter delivered via e-mail. Ferris also will be highlighted in banner ads and WWJ e-newsletters.

If you have some good news to share please let me know. I enjoy hearing about your success.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President