

From: [Jan Eckert](#)
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Subject: Ferris Names Pilgrim Chief Diversity Officer
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Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's appointment of Dr. David Pilgrim as the university's chief diversity officer. Pilgrim is a resident of Rockford. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Pilgrim fills role as chief diversity officer at Ferris State University

BIG RAPIDS – As Dr. David Pilgrim enters his role as chief diversity officer, he's excited with the prospects of what the future holds.

"Diversity is not just the color of your skin, your gender or your sexual orientation," Pilgrim said. "Diversity is the range of human differences and potential that manifests itself in members of a campus community."

A faculty member with the university since 1990, Pilgrim takes the reins of the position recently created by President David Eisler with a purpose to effect a change in the university's campus environment that will foster, promote and celebrate diversity.

"It is a pleasure to have Dr. David Pilgrim accept the invitation to serve as Chief Diversity Officer for our University," Eisler said. His academic background deals directly with diversity and his experience as founder and curator of the Jim Crow Museum on our campus makes him an ideal choice. As a University we are preparing students for a world that is global and diverse. David can provide strong leadership and focus to these efforts.

"We were fortunate to receive an excellent pool of candidates for this position, each bringing a strong record and commitment to diversity," Eisler added. "Through the application and interview process the search committee and I developed a deep appreciation for the candidates' experience and accomplishments in and their ideas for diversity on our campus."

Pilgrim is quick to note change doesn't happen overnight, but through long-term goal setting and short-term action plans, he is committed to moving Ferris closer to becoming a truly diverse institution one day at a time. He also points out this won't be a one-man show.

"This is going to have to be a campus-wide effort. This can't be the job of one person or one committee," he said, noting he sees himself as a facilitator of change and as a resource person helping people make a change.

To begin, Pilgrim says the university needs to assess where it is in terms of diversity

initiatives that are working well and where improvement is needed. The university also will be incorporating diversity into its strategic plan. “I am speaking about an inclusive institutional culture, where diversity is represented throughout and within all aspects of the campus.

“We are ready as an institution to mature and we’re ready to transform into a community where diversity is a fundamental value,” Pilgrim said.

“The total campus climate should be welcoming – one that respects, fosters and celebrates diversity and inclusiveness,” he added.

Pilgrim is a tenured professor of Sociology who is a frequent author and speaker on racism and diversity issues throughout the country. He is the creator of the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, designed to serve as an educational resource for the scholarly examination of historical and contemporary expressions of racism. He also was one of the original members of the Diversity Counts! Committee.



David Pilgrim Ferris State University.jpg

CAPTION – Dr. David Pilgrim, a tenured professor of Sociology at Ferris State University who is a frequent author and speaker on racism and diversity issues throughout the country, was named the university’s chief diversity officer.

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