

October 16, 2004- October 22, 2004

Media Packet

- **Dr. Slime wows kids with magic of chemistry**
- **Next month's arrival of 'The Polar Express' will be bigger than life**
- **Alumni Building: Remembering times gone by**
- **Ferris State kicks off homecoming celebration**
- **Outdoor club brings kids close to birds**
- **Experiencing America**
- **University remembers its past**
- **Ferris unveils 'Journey,' next Art Walk addition**
- **Faculty, students recognized by Michigan College of Optometry**
- **Money back in rightful hands**
- **Da Vinci Challenges names winners**
- **Welcome back to Big Rapids**
- **HVACR teams win and place at ASHRAE**
- **Coping with an aging work force**
- **LCC and Ferris State offer '3+1' bachelor's degree**
- **Muskegon River Watershed Research Partnership seeks to better understand, manage river in future**

Pioneer

October 16 & 17, 2004

Dr. Slime wows kids with magic of chemistry

BIG RAPIDS - From "elephant's toothpaste" to fluorescent green slime, Dr. Slime took area fifth- through eighth-graders on a science experiment tour Friday afternoon in the Crossroads Charter Academy (CCA) Auditorium.

An atypical chemist, Dr. Slime was a hit with the middle-schoolers, who learned a thing or two about chemical reactions while at the same time entertaining themselves with the experiments' results.

"The elephant's toothpaste' was cool when it kinda exploded out of the tube," CCA eighth-grader Kija Meads said. "The electricity ... that was cool, too."

Added CCA eighth-grader Zac Vander Goot, "This makes you want to learn more about science ... I wanted to take chemistry anyway, but this really makes you want to take science."

Dr. Slime's, a.k.a. Michael Garlick, presentation was sponsored by Ferris State University's American Chemical Society Student Affiliate Group (ACS). The group is advised by chemistry professor Pasquale Di Raddo and Kelley Templin, Ferris faculty.

"We like to get involved in the community as much as we can," said Ferris senior Erin Frankowicz, a Garden City applied biology/premed major and member of ACS.

Dr. Slime is the first presentation of this kind sponsored by ACS, but the organization's members have participated in hosting science experiments for kids and inviting them to come to Ferris for various other science-related presentations, Di Raddo said.

"This activity aims to reveal to youngsters the fun and explorative nature of chemistry, which is far from the dreary, numerical and geeky subject that too many might remember from their school days," he added

CCA Elementary Principal Karen Christensen agreed. "Any time you have an assembly like this that shows the application of science makes it exciting," she said "Things like this are wonderful for students."

Garlick is trained in small-scale chemistry and is the laboratory manager at Delta College in Saginaw. Students from Crossroads, Hillcrest Elementary School, St. Mary School, St. Peter's School, as well as home-school students, were able to enjoy his presentation, highlighting the magic of science.

The Grand Rapids Press

October 17, 2004

Next month's arrival of 'The Polar Express' will be bigger than life

This train is bound for glory, this train. Not the train Woody Guthrie and others sang about, but The Polar Express. It's coming to Grand Rapids. In a colossal way.

On the evening of Nov. 5, Hollywood will take a back seat to Grand Rapids when the red carpet - and a whole lot more - will be rolled out for the world premiere of the movie "The Polar Express," based on the wildly popular children's bestseller by Grand Rapids native Chris VanAllsburg.

And integral to creating the same haunting effects that VanAllsburg's paintings have on his readers, gigantic scenes that depict the pages in the book will help transport the black tie crowd into another world. The backdrops - one is four stories high and another 90 feet wide, or 30 feet longer than a bowling alley - are being rendered by talent-rich students and staff from Ferris State University's Kendall College of Art and Design.

"The idea is to have the viewer actually step into the pages of the book," explained Molly Alicki-Corriveau, a Kendall instructor working alongside nearly 100 students involved with the artistic effort.

Alicki-Corriveau acknowledged that "We had no idea what we were doing when we started out," in part because Kendall students have never embraced such a gargantuan project.

The canvasses, or theater-quality "scrim" on which the students are painting, nearly fill the floor of the downtown YMCA's main-level gymnasium, which has been transformed into a behemoth studio.

Since late September, students assigned to the project as part of illustration classes and students who just want to volunteer have been spending long hours rolling gallon after gallon of latex house paint onto the scenes they've re-created.

The final product will manifest itself in four huge paintings that will welcome 1,000 folks paying \$250 a ticket to attend the world premiere of "The Polar Express" on Nov. 5.

The fete will begin in downtown Grand Rapids at the DeVos Place, where the Kendall-produced paintings will hang as part of a fantasy land created to mimic the book.

Then it's back to DeVos for an Oscar-style celebration that doesn't wind down until midnight.

"This is truly something normally reserved for an L.A. premiere," said Diane Jones, a public relations director working to promote the event, which will benefit Hospice of Michigan's Pediatric Program.

Unsure of exactly how to replicate the Polar Express on canvasses the size of billboards, instructors and students discovered the wind at their backs when they were granted permission to use the YMCA's gym

That's because an oval running track suspended above the gym floor allows students and instructors to direct their fellow painters far below.

While priming the canvasses was simply a job of rolling on layers of "chestnut brown" paint, creating figures on landscapes proved more difficult.

"We found some jump ropes in the closet," said Alicki-Corriveau, "and used those to lay out the basic shapes."

With students directing from above, painters sketched out everything from mountains to evergreens to wolves lurking in the forest, then filled in the colors, doing their best to replicate VanAllsburg's sophisticated method of melding hues.

"I can't wait for the public to view this," said illustration student Alicia Hall, of Stillwater, OK. "It's going to be a neat thing - and (pictures of the works are) definitely going into my portfolio."

Fellow student Shannon McGaffigan, of Swartz Creek, said that she, like others, were amazed at the size of the canvasses.

"I'm used to doing watercolor on a sheet that's maybe 30 by 40 inches," she said. "So this is a big jump."

Senior Ten Rose, of Sault Ste. Marie, admitted being "really skeptical" when the scrim was rolled out. But she was easily motivated, sharing that "We were bribed with pizza."

The students' backdrops will be augmented by two- and three-dimensional cut-outs representing objects found on the pages of VanAllsburg's book, which focuses on a boy whose belief in Christmas is confirmed when a train takes him to the North Pole on Christmas Eve.

The movie, which stars Tom Hanks in several roles, is being released by Warner Bros., which has supplied three reels to Celebration Cinema for the big night.

The premiere is the culmination of 18 months' work by 60 volunteers working on seven committees funded by five title sponsors who each ponied up \$50,000.

They include Alticor, Meijer Inc., Northern Trust Bank, Celebration Cinema and Visser Brothers Inc.

Marcie Hillary, director of development for Hospice, said the \$1.2 million her organization hopes to realize from the premiere far exceeds their previous largest fund-raiser, which netted \$400,000.

"I don't know what I'm going to do when it's all done," she said of the long-planned event.

There's something else left unanswered as well - a question neither Hillary nor students or staff at Kendall could solve.

After the premiere, what do you do with 8,420 square feet of canvas backdrop?

Pioneer

October 18, 2004

Alumni Building: Remembering times gone by

Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2004, marks the 75th anniversary of the dedication of the Ferris State University Alumni Building.

The facility is the only remaining structural remembrance of the original campus on the southwest corner of Oak and Stewart following the huge fire in February of 1950 that claimed Old Main.

While it's once prominent role as the center of campus activities has diminished to use as an office, classroom and storage building, it still remains as the center of the Ferris experience for countless students who attended before the days of Ferris State College.

And, there are many residents of the Big Rapids area and places across the country who can still remember the pride, and joy of Ferris Institute when they attended or took part in activities as employees of Ferris Institute and residents of the area, as well.

One of those individuals will speak at a 4 p.m. ceremony Tuesday and recount his experiences in the Alumni Building during over three decades as an instructor and administrator at FSU.

Dacho Dachoff, who came to Ferris in 1953 as director of bands and also served as a former special assistant to the president for the arts before retiring in 1984, will talk about the events, activities and classes held in the building and the role it played in the lives of students, staff and the community.

The Sarasota, Fla. resident is well remembered by many area residents and will certainly offer a knowledgeable perspective considering that the grand old building was still the center of campus life during the first decade of his tenure.

In those years the building still hosted concerts, convocations and athletic events and as director of bands, Dachoff probably knew the building as well as his own home.

Dachoff and FSU President David Eisler will be the principal speakers at Tuesday's ceremony to remember the role of the most historic building on campus. The ceremony will be held in the building's lobby, restored to reflect those bygone times.

And with all members of the campus and local communities invited to attend, we suspect the ceremony will illicit a flood of memories among those attendees who experienced those times gone by.

Pioneer

October 18, 2004

Ferris State kicks off homecoming celebration

BIG RAPIDS - Bed sheet banners helped Ferris State University kick off its Homecoming 2004 celebration Sunday afternoon, with a week full of activities still to come.

Campus activities highlighted during this year's festivities include a lip sync contest today, kickball Tuesday, pep games Wednesday and bonfire Thursday.

Special events include a 75th anniversary observance of the university's Alumni Building tomorrow at 4 p.m., with professor emeritus Dacho Dachoff speaking on the building's historical significance to the university.

Saturday, the university has several activities planned to commemorate this year's homecoming, beginning with "Picture This - Photographs of Ferris" from 9 a.m. to noon. The community and alumni are invited to identify historical photos, as well as submit their own to be scanned and added to university archives.

An alumni welcome tent will be set up in Lot 37 west of Top Taggart Field, where former students are invited to gather from 10 a.m. until game-time. A black alumni tailgate reception also is planned in Lot 37 beginning at 11 a.m. running until the game and during half time. Other events of interest are a 5K run and the usual homecoming parade through downtown Big Rapids.

After football activities commence, a black alumni reunion and homecoming reception is being held from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at Eastgate Lanes with black light bowling, a game room and music. The all student/all alumni dance and reception includes the black alumni, gridiron and veterans receptions.

This year's homecoming activities are hosted by the Ferris Student Homecoming Committee, student government, student leadership and activities and alumni relations office.

Pioneer

October 19, 2004

Outdoor club brings kids close to birds

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University's Outdoor Club is lending a hand to the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization Saturday by conducting an education program about Michigan birds.

The program, part of the Ferris Student Volunteer Center's observance of "Make a Difference Day," runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. starting at Northend Riverside Park volunteer center aims to promote a commitment to community service and foster a lifelong service ethic in students.

"The participants will first be led on a 'bird walk' down rails to trails, where several club members will point out different birds and add some natural history facts about each species," said Bret Muter, Outdoor Club president. "Following lunch, we have a listening activity planned with the children. We will play various bird songs and 'quiz' them on the kind of bird featured."

The group will then assemble natural bird feeders using pine cones, peanut butter and bird seed, said Muter, a Saginaw junior majoring in environmental biology.

In addition to focusing on outdoor recreation activities, the Outdoor Club participates in community service projects that benefit the environment. In the past, the group has been involved in camping, white-water rafting, hiking, canoeing, fishing, planting trees and helping with several clean-up projects. The club also hosts presentations by various speakers.

Pioneer

October 19, 2004

Experiencing America

Studying grassroots efforts: International students in Penny Wheeler's Intensive English Program at Ferris State University visited the Recycle Center on Fourth Avenue in Big Rapids as part of their studies about grassroots recycling efforts. The students, from Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Thailand and Hong Kong, noted that in their countries, recycling programs are largely government-run. Chris Luchies, a part-time employee at the Recycle Center, discusses what he does with Phu Nguyen of Vietnam and his classmates.

Pioneer

October 20, 2004

University remembers its past

BIG RAPIDS - Homecoming is a time to celebrate tradition and Ferris State University honored its history Tuesday afternoon during an Alumni Building 75th Anniversary celebration.

Dedicated 75 years ago to the day, Oct. 19, 1929, the structure hosted everything from basketball games, commencement ceremonies, concerts, theater productions and classes.

Tuesday's festivities highlighting the building's history came during Homecoming Week 2004 and included current and former students and staff, including a Ferris basketball player and band member.

"There are a lot of fun memories below," Ott Gingrich said. "I not only played here for Ferris but in Reed City tournaments ... when Reed City played Big Rapids the games were here because the games always brought a crowd. The gym could seat about 1,000 people."

Gingrich played basketball for Ferris from 1947-50, graduating from Ferris Institute in 1951. He and his wife, Helen Fairman Gingrich, also a Ferris Institute graduate, live on Clear Lake.

Former music instructor and band director Dacho Dachoff also reminisced about the "Golden Era" of the Alumni Building. He was the event's guest speaker.

"I have a lot of fond memories of the Alumni Building," Dachoff said. "I remember 11 a.m. Tuesday morning assemblies ... the pep band playing for all of the basketball games ... band concerts were held in the gym."

The Alumni Building served as a multi-purpose venue over the years, hosting anything from a ballet, basketball games, commencements, speakers, an opera and symphony, he said.

There was a cafeteria, academic classes and dressing rooms for men and women.

The structure was what modern-day student activity centers encompass - an area for students to gather and socialize, Dachoff said. Essentially, the building was several of Ferris' current structures rolled into one.

"The Alumni Building is a tribute to the ideals and pioneering work of Ferris," he added, saying, the greatest of the arts is the "art of living."

This building let students live Woodbridge Ferris' ideals of teaching students to live and develop a total person, he said.

Added Ferris President David Eisler, "I think Ferris summed up this day, saying, Education is life."

The celebration salutes the building's place in the university's history, while at the same time celebrating the vision of the people who came before us, Eisler said.

Precisely what the History Commemoration Task Force, developed by former Ferris President Bill Sederburg, hoped for with anniversary festivities.

"The mission: celebrate the mission and history of Ferris," task force Chairman and music professor Harry Dempsey said. "This ties into the history and past ... it's about giving exposure of Ferris traditions and history ... to bring people here and make them aware.

"This is the only state institution named after a person and that's a direct link to our founder," Dempsey said.

"His mission can carry on and what he was all about."

Other events in the works for the task force, in its fourth year, include: an oral history project, a rededication of the Williams Auditorium lobby and rededication of what used to be the president's room and what is now the founder's room.

Pioneer

October 20, 2004

Ferris unveils 'Journey,' next Art Walk addition

BIG RAPIDS – 'Journey,' a two-part sculpture in the atrium of Ferris State University's Timme Center for Student Services, will be completed Friday with an 11:30 a.m. unveiling of its companion piece.

All members of the campus and local communities are invited to attend the event to view the latest addition to the Art Walk. The unveiling will be in the third floor lobby of the president's office and will be preceded by light refreshments at 11 a.m.

"The two-piece 'Journey' sculpture is rather subtle in content," said Robert Barnum, Ferris artist-in-residence. "All art in the Art Walk must relate to site by physical space requirements and by area academic content or philosophy. In this particular case, most students or others who enter the Timme Center are on a business agenda.

"These visitors or building users are not in an academic environment that would suggest a contemplative atmosphere," noted Barnum.

"'Journey' is a piece of art one might discover as much by accident as by deliberate effort. The art simply suggests that we are in a constant state of evolving or moving on."

Both pieces are made from aluminum with the main hanging sculpture consisting of approximately 130 cut and bent birds.

The second sculpture is a floor-mounted negative shape version of the first, weighing about 500 pounds and including a limestone base.

Pioneer

October 21, 2004

Faculty, students recognized by Michigan College of Optometry

LANSING - Two members of the faculty and a student at the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University have received recognition at the 108th Annual Convention of the Michigan Optometric Association. The convention was conducted at the Somerset Inn in Troy.

Dr. Mark E. Swan, member of the faculty, was elected association secretary-treasurer at the convention. Dr. Swan, a 1988 graduate of MCO, previously served as trustee on the association board of directors and was a winner of the association's Keyperson Award in 2003. As secretary-treasurer, Dr. Swan is in charge of the association's Administrative Division, which includes committees on membership development, membership services, finance and resource management and conventions.

Another member of the faculty, Dr. Michael Shansky, received the Jack W. Bennett Educator of the Year Award during the annual awards luncheon of the convention. The award, named for the founding dean of MCO, recognizes an outstanding optometric educator. Students at the college nominate persons to receive the award.

Jeffrey J. Kenyon, fourth-year student at MCO, received the association's Student of the Year Award during the awards luncheon. Kenyon is a past president of the Optometric Student Government, served as event coordinator for the Fellowship of Christian Optometrists is an MCO Student Ambassador. He made a Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity trip to Guyana, is a recreation leader at his church an American Red Cross blood drive coordinator. Kenyon was selected for the award, which recognizes outstanding leadership and academic achievement, by the MCO Scholarship and Awards Committee.

Pioneer

October 22, 2004

Money back in rightful hands

BIG RAPIDS - On his way to work at Ferris State University's (FSU) NASCAR Grille Wednesday morning, Rick Modene drove through a fortune, but became a "good Samaritan."

The Paris native and FSU dining services employee was heading southbound on State Street, when he passed Grunst Brothers Sport Center and Party Store and Muffler Man at approximately 6:50 a.m.

"I don't normally wear my glasses, but this morning I happened to grab them before leaving for work," Modene said. "As I was passing the Muffler Man intersection, a bunch of stuff flew up in front of my car."

Modene remembers seeing a bill flash before him.

"It took me a block to recognize it was money," he said. "I turned around, parked the car at Muffler Man and walked into the road, where all these \$20 bills were laying everywhere."

Modene collected more than \$260 in cash, and a Muffler Man employee helped by gathering another \$30.

After contacting the Big Rapids Department of Public Safety - Police Division, Modene decided to search again, for more money. He then found a sealed bag and realized the money was part of a deposit from a local business.

According to Officer Eric Little, who received the found money and bag from Modene, the business - El Vaquero, the local authentic Mexican restaurant has been contact and will be able to pick up the evidence Friday morning.

Little also couldn't provide the total amount of money found, but he did say it was less than \$1,000.

When he discovered the missing the bag, Modene didn't open it entirely; however, he did find a \$392 bank deposit receipt.

"I think it belongs to a local restaurant because there were server slips inside. There also were two more deposit receipts, including one for more than \$500," Modene said.

When asked whether he thought of keeping the money, Modene answered, "At first I did, but when I found the bag, I realized it belonged to a business. (El Vaquero) should feel lucky nobody else found the money."

Little said providing Modene with a reward for returning the money is up to the business. Modene resides in Paris with his wife, Julie, and they have two boys, Jake (19) and Wyatt (22).

Pioneer

October 22, 2004

Da Vinci Challenge names winners

BIG RAPIDS -The Da Vinci - Challenge tested the code-cracking abilities of Ferris State University students and Big Rapids community members, with two divisions of winners being announced Thursday.

The competition, based loosely on Dan Brown's book "The Da Vinci Code," challenged groups and individuals to solve codes based on the subject matter of Leonardo's notebooks, including such topics as botany, biology, anatomy, zoology, architecture and painting.

Taking first place and a \$100 prize in the student division were three Big Rapids women: freshman Sarah Rescoe and juniors Elizabeth Ward and Anne Hogenson. The \$100 prize in the community division went to "The Book Dogs" of Great Lakes Book and Supply, represented by Bette Longstreet and Gretchen Denlinger.

Sponsoring the prizes were Ferris' College of Arts and Sciences, Great Lakes Book and Supply and Independent Bank.

Two types of codes kept scholars busy, Rankin Center Gallery Coordinator Carrie Weis-Taylor said.

The first codes required participants to use good research and thinking skills and the second a visit to Mecosta County places.

Weis-Taylor added the competition was a unique way to challenge students and community members intellectually, allowing them to have fun at the same time.

There were 69 teams registered at the start of the week-long challenge, with approximately 25 teams turning in answers by the 4 p.m. deadline Oct. 12, Ferris Professor James "Ted" Walker said. The competition began at 5 p.m. Oct. 5.

"People are already asking about the next challenge," Walker said, adding he is not sure if another competition will be scheduled next year.

Pioneer

October 22, 2004

Welcome back to Big Rapids

It's that time of the year again.

The leaves have turned and still provide some color though the majorities have already blown away.

The days have cooled to sweater and jacket weather and the evenings are even colder.

And, Homecoming activities are under way at the school on the hill, " Ferris State University.

We've already viewed the students celebrating with bed sheet banners, a lip sync contest, kickball, pep games and a big bonfire last night.

And, the older folks joined in with the young people to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the university's Alumni Building earlier this week.

But the big finale is yet to come, highlighted by the Homecoming parade in downtown Big Rapids tomorrow at noon and the Homecoming game with Michigan Tech on the Top Taggart Field at 2 p.m.

It's an annual tradition of the community joining in with the students and alumni to celebrate yet another year at a school that began way back in 1884 in rented space above a store on the corner where the JC Penney store now stands.

It brings back memories for many and creates memories for others.

It crams the community with activity and turns this normal quiet town with people, people and more people. Many of those people plied the halls of Ferris buildings past and present as they endeavored to learn skills needed for their livelihoods.

Others are learning those skills at Ferris now. Others from the community, both employees of the university and area community will renew acquaintances they made with "pinheads" of the past.

Other activities still on tap include:

- Saturday's Make A Difference Day celebration when everyone is invited to drop by the

Top Taggart parking lot between noon and 3 p.m. to donate food, clothing, eyeglasses and money to help Project Starburst and the United Way;

- a women's soccer game with Ashland at 2 p.m. on the East Campus Soccer Field;

- the Homecoming Dance at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center;
- a "Picture This Photographs of Ferris" session between 9 a.m. and noon at FLITE 135 when community members and alumni can stop by to view and help identify old pictures or to scan their own pictures to add to the university archives;
- a welcome tent west of the football field where alumni can gather from 10 a.m. until game time;
- a black alumni tailgate reception in the same location beginning at 11 a.m. and running up to game time and at halftime;
- a black alumni reunion and homecoming reception from 9 p.m. Saturday until 2 a.m. Sunday at Eastgate Lanes;
- a 5-K run.

And alumni still around on Sunday are encouraged to attend a women's soccer game with Findlay at noon on the East Campus soccer Field and an Athletes in Action exhibition hosted by women's basketball at 2 p.m. in Wink Arena.

We join in with the rest of this community and the Ferris campus in welcoming alumni back to Ferris for yet another year of Homecoming fun.

See you at the game.

Missaukee Sentinel

September 24, 2004

HVACR teams win and place at ASHRAE

BIG RAPIDS--Two teams of Ferris students in Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration were awarded honors in an annual competition sponsored by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

For a record fifth year in a row, team from Ferris came out on top in HVAC System Design. The team consisting of Trevor Fink, Bra Green, Joe Borders, Ray Wrobe Bhushan Jhoshi, John Lindman and Faculty Advisor Doug Zentz was awarded first-place honors in the design category. The win also gave the Ferris design team its sixth first place finish in the last seven years.

Undergraduate students were challenged to design an educational dramatic arts studio in Denver, Colo. Projects were evaluated on anticipated operating costs, environmental impact, comfort, health, creativity and communication of results.

The Ferris team chose a geothermal water source heat pump system with a dedicated outdoor air system. Geothermal systems typically last longer than conventional systems because they are protected, from the harsh outdoor environment, according to the team. Ground loop manufacturers guarantee their loop materials for up to 25 years with no maintenance involved.

"Our geothermal system has better temperature control, causes less of an environmental impact, and is more efficient than conventional systems," the team noted. "Many electrical and rural electric cooperatives are offering monetary incentives for installing geothermal systems because the geothermal system's peak demand curve flattens out over time."

Ferris' recently dedicated Granger Center for Construction and HVACR boasts a number of heating and cooling systems, including geothermal, on which students learn real-world applications.

Second place in the HVACR system selection category, also advised by Zentz, was awarded to Nick Coggins, Jamie Dorland, Craig Feldpausch, Andy Lemanczyk and Eric Cass. A Ferris system selection team has taken first place three of the last five years, finishing second in 2003 and 2004.

The international competition is held each year to recognize outstanding student design projects, to encourage undergraduate students to become involved in the profession, to apply their knowledge of practical design and to promote teamwork.

First-place teams in each category receive \$1,500 and transportation and lodging costs for a representative to attend ASHRAE's 2005 Winter Meeting Feb. 5-9, in Orlando, Fla., to receive their awards. Each of the projects will be represented in a poster session during the meeting.

The 2005 ASHRAE Student Design Project Competition will focus on The Brewery Blocks, a mixed use retail, residential and office grouping of five buildings in Portland's Pearl District.

Business Direct Weekly
September 30, 2004-October 6, 2004

Coping with an aging work force

In St. Joseph County, 42.4 percent of the work force falls into the manufacturing sector. So the retention of good manufacturing workers and the recruitment of future workers are issues with which David Allen, executive director of the **St. Joseph County Economic Development Corp.**, has become very familiar.

“According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, our work force is aging,” Allen said. “Job creation in the manufacturing arena has been stagnant in recent years compared to other sectors. This means younger people are probably looking elsewhere for jobs,

There is validity to the fear that businesses can expect a shortage of workers. Allen again cites the Bureau of Labor Statistics, saying in 2012, the labor force is projected to grow to only 162.3 million while total employment increases to 165 million.

“The (kindergarten) through-12 and community college system has valiantly tried to direct more people into manufacturing fields,” Allen Said.

“Unfortunately in the U.S. we graduate more generalists than students with a degree in engineering.”

In Asia 35 percent of graduates have a degree in engineering, while the United States graduates about six percent of students with this degree, he said.

“Our students need more training in sciences, math and engineering to be competitive in future job markets,” Allen said

Amerikam Inc. in Grand Rapids uses its retirees to help educate the younger work force, president and CEO Stephanie Leonardos said.

“One of the strong points of our human resources here is to tap our retirees for the strength and sage knowledge they have in our industry,” Leonardos said. “It is common to have Amerikam retirees return on a part-time basis to be involved in teaching or special projects.”

Now in its 70th year, the privately owned business designs and manufactures close tolerance components and products for a variety of industries. To further students manufacturing knowledge, Amerikam maintains a collaborative program with Ferris State University in Big Rapids.

“The manufacturing technology students are required to complete the Ameikam Project for graduation,” she said. Amerikam employees work with the students to bring

real work experiences and knowledge to the curriculum. The students then complete a detailed manufacturing project and give a presentation here at Amerikam.

This becomes an excellent recruitment tool for engineers, she added; The company also is involved in a program with Kendall College of Art and Design at Ferris.

“As a community member, our managers frequently visit local middle and high schools to speak about manufacturing as a career and vocation,” Leonardos said.

“It is an opportunity to overcome the boundaries and obstacles that are often part of the image of manufacturing.”

Amerikam representatives let the young students know first-hand about the creativity, job satisfaction and potential compensation in manufacturing. They also answer some tough questions about potential layoffs and downturns in the industry.

We emphasize “staying diversified in a worldwide market with focus and strong research and development to differentiate; minimize risks and keep work here,” Leonardos said.

“We also emphasize the importance of problem-solving skills in a competitive world and owning the responsibility of our success in the decisions we make.”

Community News

October 3, 2004

LCC and Ferris State offer '3+1' bachelor's degree

DELTA TWP - Lansing Community College President Paula D. Cunningham and Ferris State University President David L. Eisler signed an agreement that will allow students to complete a bachelor's degree in Industrial Technology and Management from Ferris State after 3 years on LCC's campus and one year at Ferris.

The signing ceremony celebrated a new "3+1"- three years at LCC and one year with Ferris State University on the LCC campus - educational path for students wanting to further their careers in the manufacturing industry in either a managerial or an advanced technical position.

Annette Parker, department chair of the Manufacturing and Land Technologies Department at LCC said students can save 53 percent of the cost of the final two years of college by participating in this program.

"So that's the advantage that the students have over a high school student that comes in and takes an articulated course- it's a college that shows up on a college transcript.

The public is invited on Oct. 7 at 6 p.m. for an information session with representatives from Ferris State University. This session will be held at the LCC West Campus 5206 Cornerstone Drive in Delta Township.

Osceola Pioneer

October 6, 2004

Muskegon River Watershed Research Partnership seeks to better understand, manage river in future

In August 2000, a unique partnership was formed comprised of nationally acclaimed academic researchers in Michigan, natural resource agencies, organizations, funders and select local stakeholders in the Muskegon River Watershed, including the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly (MRWA). Known as "Muskegon River Watershed Research Partnership", its goal is to better understand how the Muskegon River functions and vide some management tools that can be used by local policy / land use decision makers to protect and sustain the watershed future generations. While these research efforts are focused on the Muskegon River tem, resulting management tools are also intended to benefit other river watersheds in the rat Lakes Basin.

Since 2000, this partnership grown to significant proportions as evidenced by the Progress made on four collaborative research projects. In short, these major research projects involve:

- 1) Determining and analyzing land use changes over the past 20 years and predicting future changes (led by Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute);
- 2) Documenting the economic and environmental costs associated with development (led by Michigan State University);
- 3) Assessing the ecological health of numerous streams, lakes and wetlands to determine how the river ecosystem responds to human influence (led by Michigan State University);
- 4) Developing a computer model to test how a variety of past and future management scenarios could affect the river ecosystem (led by the University of Michigan).

The MRW Research Partnership is now producing some results as the first 3 projects come to completion later this year and the fourth continues through 2007. As part of our on-going effort to coordinate and facilitate this partnership's outreach programs, the MRWA co-hosted (with Ferris State University) the 2004 annual conference of the MRW Research Partnership in Big Rapids on April 26. For the first time, this year's conference was oriented toward illustrating research results and included nearly 25 additional county, township, city and village officials from across the Muskegon River Watershed (including representatives from Big Rapids, Evart, Hersey, Marion, Reed City, Green & Mecosta Townships & Mecosta County).

These officials, along with other stakeholders, learned first hand about research results to date, witnessed application of management tools on a local scale and provided valuable input to researchers.

Having additional local policy / land use decision makers at the latest MRW Research Partnership annual conference was important and valuable. The MRWA intends to utilize this partnership as a basis to grow a watershed-wide network of informed local decision makers with foresight, knowledge and tools to preserve, protect and restore the Muskegon River Watershed.

Detroit Free Press

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Gays fear marriage ban will end benefits

Sherri Stetten was added to the health benefits plan held by her partner, Julie Stetten, a webmaster at the University of Michigan, when her new employer, a small family-owned business, didn't provide coverage.

Six years ago that seemed the perfect solution to avoiding costly private insurance premiums. Today, the Ann Arbor pair is among 213 couples in jeopardy of losing their U-M partner benefits if Michigan voters pass a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage Nov. 2.

"A lot of people are scared," said Julie Stetten, who has worked at the university for 20 years and celebrated her 11th anniversary with Sherri on Thursday.

Depending on whom you ask, the proposed ban will either eliminate benefits for same-sex couples at some universities, public school districts and cities or simply solidify Michigan's constitutional stance that marriage is between a man and woman. People on both sides of the issue agree that organized labor agreements providing for partner benefits couldn't be changed until contracts expire.

One thing that seems clear is that if Proposal 2 is adopted, lawsuits won't be far behind.

Opponents believe the entire amendment could be voided as being too vague to Wayne State be enforceable.

More likely, however, are disputes over interpretation of the ballot language that says the union of one man and one woman "is the only agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union for any purpose."

Disagreement over whether the "similar union" language will affect employee benefits for partners of gay and lesbian couples exists even within the ranks of the proposal's advocates.

A handful of public school districts in Michigan offer domestic partner benefits; among them the Birmingham and Farmington school districts in Oakland County. Officials at both districts say the passage could have a chilling effect on their ability to make local policy decisions.

Pamela Beemer, assistant vice president for human resources at Michigan State University, said the school is taking a wait-and-see approach to the proposal. "We don't know what the impact will be," she said.

But other universities, such as U-M, Eastern Michigan University and Wayne State University, have been trying to ease the fears of employees worried about the future of their benefits.

"We do not believe that a state constitutional amendment regarding the definition of marriage would be relevant to our decisions about the benefits we offer to any of our employees and their dependents. If we are challenged, we will vigorously defend our right to offer such benefits," U-M President Mary Sue Coleman wrote to employees last week.

She said the university offers the benefits to help recruit and retain the best employees and to remain competitive.

Julie Stetten believes the benefits are a draw for employees. And she said she is pleased the university will fight to keep the policy intact.

Other universities are promising the same.

"Wayne State University is a constitutionally autonomous institution," President Irvin Reid wrote in a letter to employees. "While the scope of the proposed Constitutional Amendment is uncertain, Wayne State University will continue to offer benefits and defend its right to do so."

Patrick Gillen, an attorney with the Thomas More Law Center who helped draft the amendment, said a showdown over that provision is almost certain with state universities. But constitutional autonomy does not guarantee immunity from application of the amendment, which he pointed out, will also be in the constitution if approved Nov. 2.

Several proponents of Proposal 2 also said public employers, including schools and universities, could continue to offer benefits that would cover same-sex partners as long as the benefit was not based on domestic partnership.

Harvey Hollins, WSU's vice president of governmental affairs, said the university is not taking a position on the proposal, simply standing by a policy it has had in place since 1995.

"We don't believe the law will have an impact, the way it's written," he said.

Meanwhile, campaigns on both sides are doing what they can to get people to vote.

On Wednesday, supporters had help from Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in town to garner votes for the proposal.

And Thursday, they spent time fighting misconceptions about the proposal.

Marlene Elwell, campaign manager for Citizens for the Protection of Marriage, a grassroots group campaigning for the proposal, said the benefit issue is secondary as far as she is concerned. Legal battles are inevitable if the measure is approved, she said. But

the principle endorsed by voters will be clear, Elwell said, "This is protecting marriage. Period."

Those opposing the proposal say that's just a spin tactic to garner support.

"It's mental shorthand that some people have used to try to hide the real intent," said Dana Houle, spokesman for the Coalition for a Fair Michigan. "It has nothing to do with same-sex marriage. Same sex marriage will be illegal the morning after the election whether Proposal 2 passes or fails. Proposal 2 is really about taking away health and pension benefits from unmarried couples gay and straight."

PARTNER BENEFITS

Some of the public entities that offer domestic partner benefits in Michigan:

-Public universities

Central Michigan, Eastern Michigan, Ferris State, Grand Valley State, Michigan State, Northern Michigan*, Oakland, Saginaw Valley State University, University of Michigan, Wayne State

-Public school districts

Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Farmington, Huron Valley'*

-Municipalities

City of Ann Arbor, Ingham County, City of Kalamazoo, Washtenaw County, City of Detroit, (City Council workers only)

* Just health benefits only to some groups.

** Through Michigan Education Special Services Association, not the district itself.

Sources: Universities, schools and the Coalition for a Fair Michigan