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Business Update Publication

January 2007

Education Meets Business: Interior Design Students Gain

Exposure to the Industry

The natural evolution that drives new growth and innovative practices is a continuous reality for the professional world - in short, businesses change. Furthermore, the interior spaces that play host to this constant progression have also been adapting in order to accommodate changing work patterns and shifting strategies in the business world.

The interior design industry can play a vital role in a company's ability to maximize productivity and drive product success while creating the flexibility a business needs to continue to change and grow. Moving beyond the simple aesthetic value of a given space, interior designers draw from knowledge of environmental psychology, architecture, product design, furniture design and a particular company's composition and individual needs.

In many states, interior designers must take an accreditation test for either title or practice rights. Before reaching this point, however, the appropriate education is a necessity. Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids offers an interior design program for students that affords them the knowledge and skills to be successful in the field. With roughly 200 students, the department chair, Erli Gronberg, says that the program has been growing recently - a pattern that reflects national trends in interior design education.

Kendall requires a range of fundamental courses that give students the necessary background in areas such as computer aided design (CAD), rendering, materials, art history, national building codes, color and light, and business practices. Building on this core knowledge, students engage in a range of classes and projects throughout their four years.

One of the upper level courses that Gronberg teaches has established a partnership with Herman Miller in order to give students an extensive taste of the industry. In this class, five or six interior design students team up with three graphic design students. Their task: create a business complete with a mission statement, business philosophy, location, personnel composition, logo, and advertising; and then, create two interior design solutions for the building using the Resolve and My Studio Environment lines from Herman Miller.

The students partake in on-site training at Herman Miller with a group of experts who offer an overview of both product lines and how to design with them. While informative, this also allowed students "to get into actual environments and see how they are designed; it gave them an opportunity to see how the products are used," noted Gronberg.

Students have one month to complete the project during which they return to Herman Miller for a mid-project critique where the professionals offered feedback and "gave them a lot of good ideas" Gronberg said. These critiques allowed students to present as a team for the first time, and it gave them a good idea of what still needed to be done. Senior Manager of Learning Solutions at Herman Miller, Jeremy Smith, said this aspect of the project "is always an interesting experience because the students are often still experiencing a lot of

dissonance." According to Smith, it is at this point that project managers are able to help student to "start accelerating toward the solution." Smith also noted that while this period of critique is a learning experience for the students, for the Herman Miller team it remains "a gentle balance between showing them how you would do it and leading them to the discovery of perhaps another possibility.

According to Gronberg, the teamwork the project fostered was one of the biggest benefits to the students since "all projects are done in teams in the field." Senior David Gerard agreed saying that "This project offered an outstanding opportunity to exercise collaborative skills."

This collaboration has a unique benefit for Herman Miller as well. Smith noted that "We benefit from seeing how [the students] think alternatively about our solutions," adding that "it's a great win for us." In addition, Gronberg said that this project is "definitely a portfolio piece - something that will help them launch their careers," noting that designing with office furniture systems is one of the biggest markets for interior design students right now. Gerard noted that he is "very excited to have it as part of (his) portfolio." Students also came away from the project with increased computer skills and knowledge of designing for a large corporation. Creating their own company and then incorporating those details into the design allowed students to see more fully what a business is and what components are necessary to make it run well.

During their four years at Kendall, students work on a variety of projects ranging from small residential design to projects like the one with Herman Miller. Gronberg said that she always explains to students that in "interior design or design, you never create the problem, you only solve it: you're problem solvers." One of the hardest things for students to learn is that they have to take themselves out of that solution and design with the client in mind. The project with Herman Miller allowed students to do just that, and working with professionals in a business setting is a great way to expose them to the industry and expand their knowledge of the field.

Dowagiac Daily News

January 10, 2007

SMC studying housing for 116

With student success staying its top institutional priority, building a dormitory for 116 students in four-person suites at a cost of \$5.5 million by 2008 could help Southwestern Michigan College bolster revenue while providing an affordable "total college experience," President Dr. David M. Mathews said Tuesday.

"On-campus student housing could get us to the next level," he said of the issue he wants to bring before the Board of Trustees for a decision in April. "There appears to be market demand for this. As our recruiters go out into the schools, they consistently hear, 'I'm going to go live in a dorm somewhere,' so we're off the radar screen of a lot of students for whom we would be a great choice. And it could put us on the radar screen of students who are 40 miles away."

On-campus student housing hinges on two issues. Can its construction be self-supporting? "Can you pay the mortgage, essentially, with the rent students pay?" Mathews said. "Peer institutions have done it. I'm convinced final numbers will show it can be done.

"The second piece we're working on now is will students come and live in it? It's a unique initiative because we've got lots of financial needs at the college. This is the only thing we've looked at that has the potential to not only be self-supporting, but actually helping our overall financial situation rather than being another cost. One hundred new students bring \$300,000 in new tuition. Rents will provide enough revenue to have an on-site manager, to have resident assistants and supervision that's necessary to make for a safe facility and maintenance.

"What we're looking at" through College Suites of Missouri "is modern college dorms. Every student would have an individual bedroom, but every two students would share a bathroom and every four students would share a kitchen and living room. A suite would be fully outfitted like an apartment, but have two bathrooms and single, locking bedrooms."

College Suites, a "turnkey developer," built housing for Gogebic Community College last year. Jackson Community College is adding housing this fall.

SMC is also weighing food service options. "Davenport, for example, offers none," he said. "Other colleges, say Western, offer multiple meal plans. We have the potential to go either way with our food service vendor here. We're coming to grips financially with trying to figure out what students want and what we can provide," which might be plans of 10 or 15 meals a week.

While the Niles campus on M-60 offers "a great location for commuter students, we would want to leverage our student activities center and the beautiful facilities we have here" on the Dowagiac campus, which has hot food service already.

"One hurdle," he acknowledged, is the state Legislature's requirement that any expenditure exceeding \$1 million be "blessed - even if it's not with their tax dollars. It's called a use and finance statement you have to get approved. If we could get that approved before the Legislature went on summer recess, by fall 2008 we could have housing. We'd do bonding. If we borrowed

the money to do it, we ran the numbers with 6 percent interest, where we could get 4 1/2 percent today. I'm hopeful that the next numbers show that it could actually produce money as a revenue source" as a hedge against occupancy fluctuations. A survey of existing students is being designed.

"The thing that's harder to get at is if you're currently a high school student in Buchanan, Dowagiac, Niles, Edwardsburg or Cassopolis and you say you'd come to SMC if it had dorms, will you really do it?"

Mathews also said risk could be mitigated by an "incremental approach" where the units were constructed for 100 students at a time.

"We've got to improve our parking lots and the architects say that's going to be \$1 million," he added.

Mathews, at a news conference prior to his sixth "State of the College" address, detailed "truly extraordinary accomplishments in student learning" achieved in 2006 "even against a backdrop of drastically reduced state funding" and a third millage defeat Aug. 8 for 0.854 of a mill for 15 years.

Emblematic of SMC doing more with less, its museum collaborated with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians to serve the community with an exhibit seen fall semester by 3,500 people.

"Keeping student success as the number-one institutional priority has allowed us to keep moving forward in academic programs," Mathews said. "What we haven't done is gone to large lecture classes because of state budget cuts - and it won't happen. This is a highly interactive learning environment. I don't see Michigan's budget challenges going away. We tried the millage route unsuccessfully."

John Hartman, psychology, and David Baker, art, even created a model classroom based on research into a physical setting which might stimulate learning. One wall creates a certain mood. Facing another direction alters the ambience. "It's a statement of how committed our faculty are to doing anything to help our students learn in small groups," Mathews said.

"Every college says it cares about student success," but last year's National College Benchmarking Survey provided an objective comparison of SMC with 152 U.S. community colleges.

According to this voluntarily submitted data, SMC ranks in the top 10 percent of the country in student course success.

"SMC concentrates on student outcomes," Mathews reported to the Board of Trustees Jan. 9, "and we now have objective, external confirmation of the effectiveness of this approach to teaching and learning. All our courses focus on student outcomes. We base everything on the outcome. We ask, 'What is the student supposed to be learning, what can we do to facilitate this

learning and, finally, did they learn it?' The National College Benchmarking data shows that this approach has now distinguished SMC on a national level."

This outcome-based approach, facilitated in small classes by faculty, is enhanced by many types of academic support, such as free tutoring and access to technology in SMC's Teaching and Learning Centers (TLC).

In the fall of 2006 alone, SMC TLCs logged 15,276 student visits, each averaging slightly over an hour.

"Clearly," Mathews remarked, "SMC has focused limited resources where they can make the biggest difference for our students, and that is making sure that we do everything within our power to help each student succeed."

Transfer student success was another 2006 measurement of which SMC is proud.

SMC transfer students do well at WMU, Ferris

"Approximately 14 months ago," Mathews said, "SMC received a detailed report from Western Michigan University (WMU) regarding its academic accomplishments of SMC's transfer students, showing that they consistently outperformed transfer students from other institutions, and they consistently outperformed students who began their career at WMU."

SMC transfers to WMU averaged a 3.24 GPA, compared to 2.97 GPA by transfers from other colleges and 2.95 for students starting at WMU.

In 2006, SMC received similar data from Ferris State University (FSU).

SMC students who transferred to FSU earned a grade-point average (GPA) of 3.32 at Ferris, which is significantly higher than the GPA of all other Michigan community college transfer students (3.10) and FSU students in general (3v04).

To promote bachelor's offerings, SMC hired outreach specialist Lisa Topping to manage previously underutilized space in the Dale A. Lyons Building into the University Center, where Ferris, WMU and Bethel maintain offices.

In addition to the success of SMC students upon transfer to other colleges and universities, SMC students who complete workforce-preparation programs are also succeeding at impressive levels.

The 2006 survey of SMC graduates showed that 97 percent of SMC program graduates from the previous year who did not transfer to another educational institution are now employed.

According to Mathews, "SMC's workforce preparation programs are teaching the skills that employers want, students are mastering the skills that employers want and virtually all of these students are finding employment."

Mathews identified institutional accomplishments for 2006, including expansion of the automotive technology facility, winning a \$635,000 competitive federal grant and the state funding award to create an information technology certification center with the Barbara Wood Building.

SMC expanded automotive technology in 2006, moving it from the Wood basement into the former aviation hangar.

Welding followed machine tool, which morphed into precision production technology to the M-TEC Center at the Niles Area Campus in Milton Township.

Aviation facility sold for automotive growth

"The first phase that relocated the automotive technology program to function in the new, much larger, space was completed approximately 18 months ago," Mathews said. "The second phase, that added many of the finishing touches, was completed in September. Both phases of the renovation were funded entirely from proceeds gained from the sale of SMC's aviation maintenance assets (for \$454,000) when that program closed."

The new facility gives students the opportunity to learn exactly what they need to know to work in an auto dealership. The parts inventory control and most other functions in the center operate just as they would in an auto dealership, so students have a setting that resembles the modern workplace and also learn procedures they will need to know in the workplace.

Instead of thick Chilton's books for each model year of each car, students work off laptop computers with wireless access to vehicle technical manuals.

\$635,000 federal grant creates summer camp

In June, students began to benefit from the \$635,000 grant from the Department of Labor to support SMC's precision production technology program.

Area high school students attended one of two summer camps that focused on career opportunities in the precision production technology field. Leveraging federal dollars allows SMC to accomplish more for the community than would be possible within the college's general fund budget.

IT Center

Also in 2006, after six years of planning, construction began on the information technology (IT) training and certification center opening this fall.

This \$4.5 million project is transforming the existing Barbara Wood vocational building into a state-of-the-art facility providing IT training and certification far beyond what is available anywhere in the region.

"The germ of the idea came seven years ago when Larry Crandall was superintendent of (Dowagiac) schools," Mathews noted. "I was vice president for instruction, and he asked me to go with him over to New Buffalo to see training provided to students throughout Berrien County."

Half of the cost of this project is being paid by the State of Michigan.

The other half is being paid from building and site funds set aside over the past several years by the college for this purpose.

This center will serve individual students, K-12 schools, area businesses and industry and the community.

Funding challenges and student housing

Regarding the funding challenge facing the college, Mathews said, "The accomplishments of SMC students, faculty and staff have been tremendous in spite of significant funding reductions from the State of Michigan. SMC continues to operate with state aid at below the levels of nearly eight years ago. State aid to SMC in 2001 was more than \$7 million per year. By last year, this had fallen to approximately \$6 million per year. Projected state revenue shortfalls for the current year mean that the slight increase in aid that SMC was promised for the current year will most likely evaporate."

Looking forward to 2007 and the foreseeable future, SMC's focus will continue to be on student success. SMC's greatest challenge will continue to be reductions in state funding. Cost-cutting strategies will continue in all areas, but the need for additional revenue remains. On-campus student housing is one strategy for boosting revenue.

Mathews cites three "compelling reasons" for undertaking a student housing analysis which will lead to a decision by April: the need for additional revenue, market demand and SMC's mission of providing affordable access to a full college experience.

First, and foremost, SMC needs additional revenue after millage losses. The drastic five-year reduction in state funding has made it imperative that SMC generate more tuition revenue. One answer is adding student housing.

SMC has put all the other pieces of the puzzle together when it comes to a quality education. Also, through partnerships with WMU, FSU and Bethel College in Mishawaka, Ind., SMC offers eight bachelor's degrees on its Dowagiac and Niles campuses.

The piece that possibly would leverage all of these strengths to attract more students is on-campus student housing.

Second, it appears that there may be a large number of local and regional students in SMC's service area who would be interested in attending the college if on-campus housing was

available. Many students have indicated to SMC that housing is the key to their decision about where they attend college.

Third is the issue of affordable access to a full college experience. Skyrocketing university costs put a residential college experience out of the reach of many families. SMC's tuition costs less than half or even a third of that at state universities. On-campus housing at SMC could provide students with an affordable

College-life experience close to home.

The student housing study will tell SMC if housing is a viable strategy to increase revenue.

"Perhaps the most exciting fact that our current viability study has revealed is that, nationally, students who live in residence housing typically succeed in college at a higher rate than their commuting counterparts," Mathews said. "In other words, if we can make the numbers work, on-campus student housing may not just be self-supporting, may not just provide an additional revenue source to the college, but may actually advance our core mission of student success. That would be a win-win-win situation."

Where SMC can look for more students

Mathews said a fulltime student can attend SMC for less than \$3,000 a year.

"There's some point none of us know where it is where raising tuition too high actually impedes our access mission," he said.

While community colleges have traditionally tapped working adult "non-traditional students" to increase enrollments, Mathews said census data driving such decisions shows that Cass County's population of 18,541 adults in the 22 to 45 age group declines about a percent per year, or from 18,541 in 1990 to 15,238 - 17.8 percent over those 16 years.

"Non-traditional students are very important to SMC," Mathews said, "but that's not likely to be our growth area for tuition revenue. In fact, SMC is in the top 4 percent nationally in getting people to come to the college. We've done a great job marketing and we will continue to beat the drum. If we can't grow by state aid or local millage anytime in the near future, you keep coming back to tuition and what students want. They tell us they want bachelor's degree programs, which we have worked to increase."

Traditional-age students coming out of high school "want college-life activities," Mathews said. "In and adjacent to our taxpaying district are students - Dowagiac graduates - who are not putting us on their radar screen because they don't perceive that we have the totality of student life experience. We also know from national data that students will only commute 30 minutes to college. If we had student housing, however, we might be able to draw beyond our traditional service area. Room to grow is where there is a consistent pipeline of students who are going to go to college. We need to do a better job of competing for those students who have a choice."

SMC knows students want technology access, so it added wi-fi hot spots on both campuses.

Last summer SMC gutted the Zollar Sports Arena office area to free up space for the Fitness and Wellness Center, adding air hockey, video games, plasma television, ping pong so that what had been a community resource and converted it to a student resource that's open to the community. New emphasis has been placed on intramural sports, such as co-ed football and soccer.

"Those things are an important component of student life," Mathews said. "We increased tuition almost 10 percent between 2004-OS and 2005-06. That brought in another \$435,000 in tuition, but we were cut \$342,000 in state and federal aid. Our incremental millage increase gave us \$138,000 more, so net, even though we introduced tuition 10 percent; we had only \$190,000 more last year to work with than the year before. That may sound like a lot of money, but in a \$16 million budget, it's not. It cost us over \$250,000 just to give a 3-percent salary raise."

Enrollment

Mathews describes SMC's head count in terms of student credit hours for a year - about 50,000 on-campus. It's been as high as 60,000 when there was 8,000 credit hours for corporate training from Grand Rapids to South Haven.

"Our traditional-age enrollments are pretty constant," he said. "About a third of our students are traditional age and two thirds are non-traditional. As those streams have moved forward for the past 10 years, we've held our own with traditional-age students. Non-traditional-age students contracted."

Mathews said 50,000 student credit hours equates to 1,700 fulltime students; 2,100 unique Social Security numbers for regular students; 2,600 to 2,700 per semester accounting for such things as dual enrollment.

"Right now, we probably have 2,500 or 2,600 different people taking classes," Dowagiac's 1978 valedictorian said.

The Grand Rapids Press

January 13, 2007

Students take design challenge

Ruth Ribeiro is used to making her own clothes.

In fact, most of what the 22-year-old wears are altered thrift store finds or items she has made herself.

But for Ribeiro, second-hand shopping is about more than just finding bargains.

It's about social justice.

"I'm not going to feel as comfortable going to the mall, because a lot of the clothes are made in a sweatshop," the Calvin College junior said.

With a shopping basket clutched in her hand, Ribeiro scanned aisles of fabric, purses and children's clothes Friday at a Salvation Army store in Kentwood.

She was one of 13 student designers participating in the college's first "24 Hour Design Show."

The daylong challenge began Friday afternoon, when students were given \$25 and an accessory item. They could design an outfit around that accessory, or use the item to design an original outfit.

The accessory items included a red maternity pantsuit, an orange and brown shoe, a simple rope necklace and a hot pink purse.

Ribeiro ended up with a purple and teal baby carrier, which she said was "perfect" and planned to turn into a purse and top.

Students will debut their creations on volunteer models at 7 p.m. tonight at the college's Gezon Auditorium.

"It's kind of cool because it's Project Runway-esque," Ribeiro said, referring to a cable TV show about fashion design.

Calvin College's Fashion Advisory Board, a 30-member student organization, sponsored the event. The popularity of Bravo's "Project Runway," TLC's "What Not to Wear," and other design and fashion shows has led to a spike in student interest in the fashion industry, said Erin O'Connor-Garcia, student activities and organizations coordinator.

Shows that the Fashion Advisory Board has sponsored in the past have attracted up to 60 participants and about 500 audience members, O'Connor-Garcia said.

"That shows that a lot of people have been thinking about fashion but haven't had that outlet," she said.

Brenda Sipe, director of continuing studies at Kendall College of Art and Design, said she also has noticed an increase in the number of people interested in the fashion and interior design industries.

The school offers non-credit courses in fashion illustration for youth, and pattern-drafting classes for adults.

The Grand Rapids Press

January 17, 2007

Rockford Construction CEO wins humanity award

He has managed more than \$2 billion in construction projects, yet John Wheeler sees building a future for people in need as his greatest work.

The chief executive officer and chairman of Rockford Construction Co. Inc., is the recipient of the 2007 Faith in Humanity Award, an annual honor given in memory of a Catholic priest's devotion to education, diversity and social justice.

Wheeler will be recognized April 28 during an auction fundraiser for The Hugh Michael Beahan Foundation. On Tuesday, he was at St. Andrew's School in Grand Rapids sharing his thoughts about community service with students, parents and board members.

"Every one of us has a seed inside of us. All of us were born to be really good people," said Wheeler, 50. "If everybody could just be kind, it would make a big difference."

Wheeler's resume of community service includes donations of time and money to Grand Rapids Public Schools and generating more than \$1 million for area charities -- including God's Kitchen, Grand Rapids Youth Commonwealth, Inner-City Christian Federation and North Kent Service Center -- through a company-sponsored motorcycle rally and home-building fundraiser.

Wheeler also has volunteered overseas, bringing employees to Guatemala to build a school, chapel, dormitory and community center. And late last year, Wheeler and his wife spent two weeks at an AIDS clinic in Tanzania, where they plan to return to drill water wells.

"You just do it. It feels good," said Wheeler, 50. "There is no greater work than that which serves to help and empower others. I am fortunate to have become involved with many wonderful and important efforts that are aimed at rebuilding communities from the inside out."

The Faith in Humanity Award since 1987 has been given to a community member who exemplifies the ideals of the foundation's namesake, Monsignor Hugh Michael Beahan, a supporter of St. Andrew's School who died in 1980. Previous recipients include Roger's Department Store founder Hy Berkowitz, Mayor George Heartwell, Rabbi Albert Lewis and Grand Rapids Community College President Juan Olivarez.

The award's purpose "is to provide examples for our kids and our community and ourselves of people who have made a big difference," said Lisa McManus, foundation president.

McManus said Wheeler was chosen because of his efforts on behalf of education, racial harmony and global justice.

"Wherever he goes, he's like a catalyst," she said. "He's not just giving people money. He provides opportunities."

Lansing City Pulse

January 17, 2007

Exploring personal stories of immigration through art

Russian-born painter avoids politics to focus on the emotions that come with finding a new home.

When Alina Poroshina was a girl in Moscow, she says she had many toys. At age 10 she left them behind to move with her family to Lansing.

The 25-year-old painter and graduate student at Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids has since given up on gathering objects to focus on forming relationships with people and visiting new places.

"Experiences and memories are all you really have," Poroshina says. "It's like your luggage. Don't collect anything. Just travel."

It is this "luggage" that inspires Poroshina to paint.

In her latest show, "Immigration: Aesthetic of Exile," on exhibit at the Lansing Art Gallery, Poroshina takes a look beneath the surface of the subjects of her large oil paintings to give an impression of the often complex emotional baggage that comes with being an immigrant to the United States.

Through the use of bold, bright colors, unrefined brushstrokes and symbolic gestures, Poroshina conveys the full spectrum of emotions connected to the immigrant experience - hope, anxiety, nostalgia, naivety, fear and acceptance, in a style she calls "expressive realism."

Rather than delving into political themes of globalization and immigration, Poroshina concentrates on personal struggles.

Acclimating to American culture takes a different toll on everyone, she says. "You think there is no culture here, and there is," she says.

In one painting, "Culture Bound," she paints herself as an Orthodox Russian woman, covered in a traditional shawl. In the next, "Looking West," she stands on top of a building, shedding a red shawl, poised to take on her new home.

The first painting represents Poroshina as a girl in Moscow, she says. The second is the grown woman "melodramatically" embracing the present.

For some, leaving their homeland can be heartbreaking, Poroshina explains. Even within the United States, she says, people who relocate across the country must learn a new culture.

"We all go through change, and you don't have to be an immigrant to do that," she says. All of the pieces focus on human subjects, many of whom are interacting with some kind of bird or animal, which the artist uses to play on the viewer's perceptions.

"Animals have such typical stereotypes connected to them," she says.

Cranes and hawks in flight, rats and parrots in hand, eels peering from beneath the water - each animal brings another preconceived notion of what the subject is experiencing as the viewer projects ideas of freedom, longing and feeling unwanted onto them.

"I've mostly followed my own symbolism," Poroshina says.

In one series of paintings featuring women in water, Poroshina strays from focusing solely on immigration to also explore feminist ideas and what it means being a woman in a new country.

To get the images she needed to create the paintings, she says she was nearly arrested for indecent exposure, because the models entered public waters wearing only slips.

Poroshina's family, now living in Grand Ledge, settled in Lansing to be "close to the lakes," she says. It considered Washington State, but chose Michigan, because it was closer to the East Coast, where there is a larger Russian population. Poroshina attended Patengill Middle School and graduated from East Lansing High before going on to Kendall for her undergraduate studies. She hopes one day to be a professor.

Though she focuses on her Russian experience, Poroshina says, she hopes through her work to be an "agent of all ethnicity."

And it may not be too difficult for her. As a Russian Armenian, Poroshina says many people are confused about where she comes from, which has led to her being identified as many different nationalities over the years, such as Mexican and Italian.

"I should be a spy, really," she says.

Crescent News

January 24, 2007

Northwest State dean says manufacturing is not dead

Skilled manufacturing jobs are not in short supply, however, workers are.

"Everybody thinks manufacturing is dead," said Tom Wylie, dean of engineering and community and work force development at Northwest State Community College. "It's not. It's alive and well. The difference is that the work force is transitioning. It used to be labor-based, now it is skilled-based."

Locally, NSCC is doing its part to bring its students the newest technology and training available -- and succeeding.

In fact, NSCC's plastics and polymers courses are rated among the top two in the country, according to Wylie.

Similarly, Ohio stands out as the No. 1-rated state in the plastics and polymers industry. In a 60-mile radius of NSCC, there are more than 100 such factories.

Skilled jobs are in real high demand," Wylie said. "We can't get enough plastics students in our program."

Last year, for example, a company from southern Ohio approached Wylie and asked for 10 graduates from the school's plastics program. Wylie was only able to offer him two -- with the rest of the students transferring on to further their education.

Of the students who do graduate from NSCC's two-year plastics program, all are either placed right away with \$40,000 a year jobs, Wylie said, or continue their education at a four-year university, usually Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Mich., which has the largest and one of the most respected plastics undergraduate programs in the United States.

Many of NSCC's students, Wylie explained, are incumbent workers looking to upgrade their skills to keep up with technology that is invading factories across the country.

"Our labor-based jobs are being shipped overseas. Those jobs are leaving. What we have left are skilled positions," not to mention higher-paying jobs, Wylie said. But workers need the advanced training from programs such as the various engineering courses offered at NSCC, including the latest craze -- mechatronics.

"That's really hot," Wylie said. The combination of maintenance and technician equals mechatronics, a German-based concept that encompasses electrical, machining, automation and repair skills.

Last year, tech prep students (high school students who are attending college classes at NSCC) in the college's mechatronics program earned first place at a national competition.

"Along with a host of top-notch instructors, the college has the hands-on equipment students need to succeed in the world of technology," Wylie said. "From new equipment to donated equipment that the students have been known to take apart and rebuild to suit their needs, the school has the resources to turn out well-educated and qualified workers."

Wylie said he's had students in the school's CAD (computer-aided design) course design a part in about 45 minutes, feed the information into an automated machining center and turn out the part in about nine minutes.

That same part would have taken a minimum of three days to manufacture without the aid of automation. "This is where the United States is keeping jobs from going overseas," Wylie said.

"I think more than anything, people in our communities don't understand the growing technology and the job markets in the area. These are tremendous jobs that will secure the future of the people in northwest Ohio," he said.

But training at NSCC will prepare people of all ages for the skilled labor market that is increasing right here.

NSCC's engineering program offers courses in automation and controls, CAD, CAD/CAM, mechanical engineering technology quality control, HVAC-R climate control, industrial management technology, industrial maintenance, machining, machining CNC programming industrial electrician, industrial electrical, millwright, millwright programmable controller maintenance technician/mechatronics, plastics, engineering technology associate of technical studies and plastics machine maintenance.

Pioneer

January 25, 2007

Blue October coming to Ferris

The Texas rock band Blue October will headline this year's January Jams concert at Ferris State University.

The eighth annual concert, set for 8 p.m. Wednesday, will open with Army of Me in Wink Arena. Tickets are now on sale and cost \$8 for students with a student ID and \$15 for the general public. To purchase tickets, visit the Timme Center for Student Services, Rankin Student Center Information Desk, Ewigleben Ice Arena Ticket Office or www.starticketsplus.com.

January Jams started as a way for the Delta Chi Fraternity to inject some entertainment into the winter semester, said Brian Bober, fraternity spokesman.

"During fall semester, we've got Homecoming (and other activities) - there's events to get the students out and participating - there wasn't anything in winter semester," he said. "Plus, it's fun to put on a rock concert - not many people can say they've done that."

Bober describes Blue October as "adult alternative."

Blue October was formed in Houston in the late 1990s by Justin Furstenfeld, lead singer/songwriter/guitarist; his brother, Jeremy Furstenfeld, drummer; and multi-instrumentalist Ryan Delahoussaye. Later, guitarist/vocalist CB Hudson and bassist Matt Noveskey joined the group. The group is currently touring and promoting their fifth album, "Foiled," released by Universal Records.

The band was selected for January Jams by a process that begins with an informal poll of fraternity members and friends, Bober said. After eliminating unrealistic requests - bands that charge too much money, for example - the list is given to the university's booking agent. That person helps determine affordability and availability, Bober said.

"We also try to think about what will sell, what will do good," he added.

Previous bands performing during January Jams include Bowling For Soup, Nickelback, 3 Doors Down, Finger Eleven, Trapt, Sister Hazel and The Verve Pipe.

The Blue October concert is a bargain for fans, Bober said, because the highest-priced tickets are only \$15 and because the concert is here in town, so fans won't have to drive long distances.

Entertainment Unlimited and Student Government are coordinating the event with Delta Chi.

Pioneer

January 25, 2007

FSU alum writes book

As he talks about his time on the Ferris State University campus, author and Reed City resident Tim Bazzett is filled with hundreds of memories that remain as vivid as ever.

"It's hard to believe that this is where the story took place," Bazzett said. "The campus has changed so much."

The memories are captured in his recently released memoir "Pinhead," a story about his two years on the FSU campus in the mid-1960s, during which he encounters what would become lifetime friends and his eventual wife.

This is the third book Bazzett has written about his life, each progressing through a period in his life. Starting with "Reed City Boy," focusing on his adolescence in Reed City and followed by "Soldier Boy," the story of his post high school stint in the army. The trilogy ends with "Pinhead," which is ultimately the story of Bazzett looking for and finding love during his college years.

"This one (Pinhead) is the closest to my heart," he said. "My wife says it will be the last too. She doesn't want any more personal stuff to be published."

His wife, Terri, said she is pleased at how the story turned out, but still won't budge on her stance against him writing another personal memoir.

"He's done, whether he thinks he is or not," she said. "I do believe he did it as tactfully as he could. We really didn't have any huge fights over it."

Although the story is around 40 years old, Bazzett still feels that the problems and things he went through during college are ones that people of all ages can relate to.

"I think the issues like loneliness, trying to fit in and finding love are problems everyone can relate to," he said. "I think today's college kid could relate to it, but I think people my age definitely feel they share many of the same experiences, too." Bazzett said using Reed City and FSU as a backdrop gave the story a small town feel, and provided the reader with a sentimental look back at what college life was like in the 1960s.

"Ferris wasn't really anything like how much of America has been portrayed in the '60s," he said. "The whole small town idea was something that played a big part in the book."

For Bazzett, one of the most rewarding aspects of writing "Pinhead" wasn't simply the writing process, but rekindling some of the many relationships the book goes into detail about.

"That was one of the best parts," he said. "I got to talk to people from my past that I hadn't spoken to in years. I'll never forget that."

Terri agreed, saying that seeking out all of the memories was a fulfilling process.

"Getting to relive all of those memories with the people you shared them with was a special experience," she said.

Bazzett, who taught English for five years at Monroe County Community College, said that translating all of his memories into something concrete was something he always wanted to do.

"I started writing these memoirs for my kids," he said.

"I had no intention of any of it ever published."

However, Bazzett was lucky enough to have a son, Scott, who was experienced in graphic arts and helped him publish the book through Rathole Books.

Great Lakes Book and Supply Manager Lynn Anderson said the response to "Pinhead" and all of Bazzett's memoirs has been very positive.

"There's definitely interest around here, most of it has been generated by word-of mouth," Anderson said.

Anderson added that Bazzett's descriptions of the area also have created some local buzz.

"Being a local author has certainly gotten some people's attention," she said. "And the story is based around the "boomer" generation, which usually gets a pretty popular response."

Bazzett will be participating in a book signing with the Osceola League for Arts and Humanities on Feb. 22 at the Reed City Public Library.

GVSU News Center

January 29, 2007

Also ran in GV Now

Powerful exhibit hopes to teach tolerance

Grand Valley State University will be the first venue to host a powerful new traveling exhibit generated from Ferris State University's Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia.

"Them: Images of Separation" explores the subjugation of women, poor whites, gays, Jewish Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and others. It tackles some of the most contentious, cultural hot-button issues today.

The exhibition runs from February 12-March 21, in the GVSU Art Gallery, Performing Arts Center, Allendale Campus. An opening reception in the gallery is planned from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, February 15.

Also on February 15, a special exhibition lecture by David Pilgrim, professor of social sciences and curator of the Jim Crow Museum will be from 4-5 p.m. in the Grand River Room, Kirkhof Center. The lecture is sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Housing and Residence Life and the GVSU Art Gallery. Call (616) 331-2564 or visit www.gvsu.edu/artgallery.

"The exhibition not only serves as a powerful reminder of America's racist past, but also presents contemporary images of racial and ethnic stereotyping that might otherwise go unchallenged," said Pilgrim. "I'm hoping 'Them' illustrates that discrimination and stereotyping are not just black/white issues -- it's more pervasive than that."

Pilgrim, who is also chief diversity officer at Ferris, founded the Jim Crow Museum by donating his personal lifetime collection of racist memorabilia. Today the collection contains more than 5,000 pieces. "The Jim Crow Museum was founded on the belief that open, honest, even painful discussions about race are necessary to avoid yesterday's mistakes," said Pilgrim.

The museum's first traveling exhibit, "Hateful Things," focused on images demeaning to African Americans. Bonnie Marshall, who saw it in 2001, remembers "it made a very large impact." Marshall, who teaches in the Liberal Studies program at Grand Valley, began to use the exhibition's online tour in her "Diversity in the U.S." class.

She often wondered if it would be possible to bring the exhibit to Grand Valley. The idea began to take shape after meeting with Henry Matthews, GVSU's director of galleries and collections. Oliver Wilson, dean of Multicultural Affairs was also involved early on. The collaborative project, with representatives from many key areas of the campus community, saw an opportunity to build on an important message.

"Hateful Things" focused solely on African Americans, while "Them" was designed to incorporate many different groups of people. Both exhibitions promote understanding and healing through the examination of demeaning and stereotypical items from popular culture.

"We use objects that are already out there, though many people may not understand or recognize that they are demeaning," said Pilgrim. "It creates fertile ground for discussion of historical and contemporary messages."

More than 30 items in "Them" illustrate the blatant intolerance of groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Semitic factions as well as the less obvious slurs found in advertisements and on contemporary license plates or implied in school mascot characters.

"Our goal, like that of the exhibition, is to use items of intolerance to teach tolerance," said Matthews.

GVSU Art Gallery hours are Mondays-Fridays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. All Grand Valley art exhibits, lectures and receptions are free and open to the public. For more information call the Gallery at (616) 331-2564 or visit www.gvsu.edu/artgallery.

For more information about the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, visit www.ferris.edu/jimcrow. Images of exhibition items are also available at this site.

PR Newswire

January 30, 2007

Hundreds of Michigan Dentists Giving Free Dental Care to State's Low-Income Children During Annual 'Give Kids a Smile' Program Starting February 2

Starting Friday, February 2, hundreds of Michigan Dental Association dentists will provide free dental services on specific dates to low-income children across Michigan. It's part of the American Dental Association's fifth annual "Give Kids a Smile" campaign where dentists around the U.S. donate their services that day to children who, because of economic reasons, don't have access to dental care.

During last year's "Give Kids a Smile" event in Michigan, over 300 dentists, hygienists, assistants and volunteers provided dental care and oral health education to more than 22,000 children. Nationwide, 500,000 children received dental services at over 2,000 sites valued at \$100 million.

"There are thousands of disadvantaged children across Michigan who, for economic reasons, are not able to receive regular dental care," said Edwin Secord, DDS, MS, president of the Michigan Dental Association. "Through the 'Give Kids a Smile' program, we deliver free dental treatment, oral health screenings, education and prevention programs to children who need them most.

"The Michigan Dental Association wants to deliver the message that the dental profession can't solve the access-to-care problem alone, and that for every child we care for on this day, even thousands more will continue to suffer until dental health becomes a priority funding issue.

"It's important for lawmakers, as well as the public, to understand that it is absolutely necessary to have proper oral health care in order to have good overall health. Oral health is primary care," stressed Secord.

Secord went on to say, "In Michigan we are fortunate to have the Healthy Kids Dental program that provides dental care to children from low-income families in 59 of Michigan's 83 counties. As a result of this program more children are receiving necessary dental care and are beginning a pattern of regular routine preventive care."

Healthy Kids Dental was developed by the Michigan Department of Community Health and provides dental benefits to children under 21 years of age who were previously covered by the state's Medicaid dental program. The program is administered by Delta Dental Plan of Michigan.

It is expected that hundreds of dentists throughout the state will be involved in numerous events for "Give Kids a Smile." Locations across Michigan where children will receive free oral health care services include:

Detroit Area:

* Detroit - Saturday, Feb. 3, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. University of Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry, 8200 W. Outer Dr. Sponsored by the Detroit, Oakland and Macomb Dental Societies and the

UDM School of Dentistry. Dentists will provide diagnosis and treatment to more than 170 uninsured children. Call Sherri Doig at (313)871-3500 to schedule an appointment. Contact: Dr. Lloyd Lariscy before event at (313)274-8522; during event at (313)300-3335.

* Shelby Township - Friday, Feb. 2, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 55131 Shelby Rd. Dr. Jonathan Penzien will provide cleanings, exams and fluoride treatments to children ages 10 and under. Open to the public. Contact: Dr. Penzien at (248)650-5500.

* Port Huron - Friday, Feb. 2, Hispanic Outreach Center, 295 W. Huron. Dr. Melanie Sheils-Vergeldt, with the help of the Catholic Social Services Hispanic Outreach Center, will provide exams, cleanings, x-rays, fluoride treatments and sealants to 75 children. Children in need of more extensive care be referred to the University of Detroit Mercy for follow-up treatment. Event is full. Contact: Therese Costello - (248)696-1381.

Lansing -Area:

* Lansing - Friday, Feb. 2, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Lansing Community College Dental Hygiene Clinic, 500 N. Washington Square. Area dentists will provide free dental care to 63 children from Lansing's Riddle Elementary School. Sponsored by: Central District Dental Society, Lansing Community College Dental Hygiene Program, Student American Dental Hygiene Association, Lansing School District, Delta Dental, Physician's Health Plan, Capital Area Health Alliance, Central District Dental Hygienists Society and Central District Dental Assistants Society. This event is full. Contact: Dr. Greg Komyathy, (517)347-0034 or Sherry Kohlmann, (517)483-1457.

Upper Peninsula:

* Menominee - Friday, Feb. 2, New UP Dental, 4103 10th St. Oral health education, fluoride treatments, dental sealants for area children. Event is full. Contact: (906)863-2601

Northern Michigan:

* Oscoda - Friday, Feb. 2, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Alcona Health Center, 5671 N. Skeel Ave. Comprehensive dental treatment for uninsured children. Open to the public. Contact: Lea Krause, (989)739-7927.

* East Jordan - Friday, Feb. 2, East Jordan Public Schools. Area dentists will provide oral health screenings to 650 preschool through fifth grade children. Parents will receive a report and the dentists will work with school nurses to locate treatment and financial aid for those in need. Contact: Debbie, (231)536-2601.

*Big Rapids - Saturday, Feb. 17, Ferris State University Dental Hygiene Clinic, 200 Ferris Dr. FSU's Dental Hygiene Clinic will provide sealants, exams, x-rays, fluoride varnish, cleanings and minor restorations for uninsured children. Contact: Annette Jackson, (231)591-2284.

Southwestern Michigan

* Berrien Springs - Friday, Feb. 2, Berrien Dental, 8383 M-139. Comprehensive treatment for 40 children with follow-up care for those in need. Event is full. Contact: Dr. Lisa Christy, (269)471-4055.

* Benton Harbor - Friday, Feb. 2, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 1220 E. Napier Ave. Free preventive dental treatment to uninsured children. Open to the public. Contact: Michelle, (269)925-2113.

Muskegon Area:

* Muskegon - Friday, Feb. 2, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Hackley Community Care Center, 2700 Baker St., Muskegon Heights. Muskegon area dentists will provide dental care to 75 area children. Sponsored by the Muskegon District Dental Society, Muskegon Family Care, Muskegon County Health Department and the Muskegon Community Dental Coalition. This event is full. Contact: Dr. Connie Verhagen at (231)780-3200 or Lisa at (231)737-8603.

Grand Rapids Area:

* Grand Rapids - Thursday, February 8th, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. and Friday, February 9th, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., Grand Rapids Children's Museum, 11 Sheldon Ave, NE. The West Michigan District Dental Society event for area children features oral health education through the museum's interactive oral health exhibit. Several dental characters in costume will be present. Approximately 1,300 children are expected to attend the event. This event is open to the public. Contact: Dr. Amy DeYoung - (616)447-7900.

* Belmont - Friday, February 9th, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., 6220 Jupiter Ave. NE, Ste. B. Dr. John Frey will provide free exams, cleanings, sealants and oral health education to 50 uninsured children. Open to the public. Contact: Shelly - (616)222-0202.

Grand Rapids - Friday, February 9th, Peters Family Dentistry, 6651 Crossings Ct. SE. Free comprehensive dental treatment to 40 uninsured children from Explorer Elementary School. Sen. Mark Jansen and Sen. Bill Hardimann attend. This event is full. Contact: Dr. Debra Peters - (616)698-6663.

Zeeland:

* Zeeland - Friday, Feb. 2, Roosevelt Elementary School, 775 W. Roosevelt Ave., Zeeland. Hours: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. The Ottawa County Health Department and the "Miles of Smiles" Dental Team will provide oral health education to 600 children at the school. In addition, 20 children will receive preventive and restorative dental treatment, in the "Miles of Smiles" mobile dental clinic. This event is full. Contact: Lois Havermans - (616)393-5771.

Flint

* Flint - Friday, Feb. 2, Hamilton Community Health Network, G-5399 N. Saginaw, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Free dental services to 75 area uninsured children. This event is open to the public. State Rep. Brenda Clack will attend this event. Contact: Hamilton Community Health Network - (810)785-0863.

*Flint - Friday, Feb. 2, Town Center Family Dental, 4500 Town Center Parkway. Drs, Lora Thomas and Timothy Vanitvelt, will provide comprehensive dental treatment for area children. This event is full. Contact: Becky - (810)733-1410.

*Jackson - Saturday, Feb. 3, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Parkside Middle School at Parkside Fieldhouse. The Jackson center for Family Health will sponsor Step into Health day and will provide free

health screenings and prizes for the family. Children under the age of 19 will receive a free teeth cleaning, x-ray and screenings. Games, local celebrities, free snacks, the 30th Annual 5K Groundhog Gallup. Contact: Dr. Jane Grover, (517)784-1205, ext. 294.

* Jonesville - Friday, Feb. 2, Adams & Dow, DDS, 211 Harley St. Free exams and cleanings to 30 children from the Hillsdale Head Start program. This event is full. Contact: Dr. Sharon Dow - (517)849-9195.

Headquartered in Lansing, the Michigan Dental Association has more than 5,800 members in 26 local dental societies and two dental schools. Since its founding in 1856, the MDA has sought to educate the public, enhance its members' ability to provide high quality care and to promote the science and art of dentistry. For more information on the "Give Kids a Smile" program or other MDA initiatives call 800/589-2632 or log on to <http://www.smilemichigan.com>.

Michigan Dental Association

CONTACT: Tom Kochheiser of the Michigan Dental Association, 1-517-346-9422, or cell, 1-517-230-9828, or tkoch@michigandental.org Web site: <http://www.smilemichigan.com/>

Pioneer

January 31, 2007

FSU offers free rape prevention program

Every 5.6 minutes a person is forcibly raped in the United States.

This is a statistic the Ferris State University Department of Public Safety wants to change by offering training through the Rape Aggression Defense System.

The program, known as R.A.D., isn't only about learning how to fight back; it's also about preventing attacks.

R.A.D. is a 12-week course offered by the department, with the next class meeting Feb. 8, 15 and 22. The course focuses on prevention and awareness and closes with hands-on defensive training.

Attendance at all three sessions is required, according to university Officer Joy Paquette.

"It is free to all females, 13 and up," Paquette said.

The class size depends on the number of women who sign up, but usually limited to 20 people. The classes are kept small to allow more hands-on training between the students and the instructors.

While the course isn't a form of martial arts, it does teach basic, hands-on self-defense techniques. Also, participants are given a manual detailing the R.A.D. program.

With the manual students can get refresher courses anywhere R.A.D. is taught, at no charge.

"It is a really good program," Paquette said.

R.A.D. is being taught nationwide at hundreds of schools and universities in an attempt to prevent future attacks. More than 125,000 women have completed the training since the program began in 1989.

The Ferris department has been offering the program for the past six or seven years, Paquette said.

"I'd say we've had over 200 women go through it," she said. To sign up for a R.A.D. class, call the department at (231) 591-5000 or stop by the office at 1319 Cramer Circle.

Pioneer

February 1, 2007

Also ran in Pioneer 1/31/07, 9&10 News, and Tri county Shopper 2/8/07

Strangers team up to save life

One minute they were working out next to each other, the next minute they were working together to save a man's life.

Ferris State University student Kaeley Olsen and alumna Jill Newberry helped save the life of a 21-year-old Greenville man who collapsed in the FSU Student Recreation Center.

The man, a student at the university whose name was not released by campus police, was exercising when Olsen and Newberry saw him collapse. The women rushed to him and began chest compressions and called 911. Within minutes, Officer Bill Saunders administered shocks with an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

When emergency medical personnel arrived they continued the defibrillator treatment until the man was stabilized and transported him to Mecosta County Medical Center. A short time later he was taken by helicopter to Spectrum Health-Butterworth Campus in Grand Rapids. His condition was not released as of press time.

"From what we know, he was in stable condition when he was taken to Grand Rapids," said Ferris Department of Public Safety Director Marty Bledsoe.

Olsen said both she and Newberry noticed the man was in trouble when they rushed over to help him.

"We (Olsen and Newberry) both noticed this kid on the ground and his body was convulsing," Olsen said. "He wasn't breathing very good, but he was still breathing. I didn't feel a pulse and he was getting worse in color."

Olsen said she and Newberry then administered CPR until Saunders and paramedics arrived.

Newberry added that both she and Olsen worked together to help the man.

"We've (Olsen and Newberry) both had some CPR training, so I started doing mouth-to-mouth while Kaeley did the chest compressions,"

Newberry said. "I just remember trying to talk to him and remember the training that I've received."

Bledsoe said the quick response of Olsen and Newberry along with Saunders was critical in the emergency situation.

"I think people are always willing to do what it takes to help each other in situations like these," Bledsoe said. "The fact that they were able to work together is really the whole beauty of the situation.

"It's excellent to recognize what they did, but we're still very concerned with the outcome of his case," he said. "That's our main focus right now."

This was the first time the FSU campus had utilized an AED, which have been installed campus-wide within the past year. Assistant Director of Public Safety Jim Cook added that the availability of the AED, along with the early response, was what made all of the difference in saving the man.

"Without the early intervention and use of the AED, it's safe to say he wouldn't be alive," Cook said.

Olsen said being able to help was second nature, and the help she and Newberry provided was instinctive.

"If you see somebody in distress, your first instinct is to help them," Olsen said.

"It feels good to know that I helped, but I'd feel a lot better knowing that he's doing better."

Newberry agreed saying that the incident has given her more of an appreciation for the work paramedics do every day.

"It feels awesome to know that I helped in any way," she said. "But also it gives you more of an appreciation for what they (paramedics) do all the more. You hardly ever see them get any recognition for what they do, and they do it all the time."

Pioneer

February 1, 2007

Student recognized for help at accident

Jessica Finney didn't expect to be helping people in emergency situations until after graduation. Last month she had no choice but to begin her role as a life-saver.

Finney, a Ferris State University sophomore who is studying nursing, was thrust into the role after observing an accident during which a pedestrian was hit by an oncoming vehicle.

"I think it was instinctive to try and help him," Finney said. "If I hadn't been a nursing student, I don't think I would have been able to help."

Finney was awarded a certificate of recognition Wednesday in front of her fellow nursing students in room 325 of the Allied Health Building by FSU Department of Public Safety Director Marty Bledsoe and other officers.

"I think it's important that you recognize students for their heroic behavior," Bledsoe said. "It's the only way to send the message that it's important for the campus community to help each other."

Finney is a nursing major in the College of Allied Health who hopes to eventually work in a hospital trauma emergency room. She immediately went to check the victim for injuries. After discovering he had suffered a head injury, Finney held pressure to the wound to help control the bleeding while maintaining control of the victim's neck to protect him from further injury.

She also aided the victim by speaking with him as well as completing assessment questions on him to help determine if he has sustained a concussion.

"I couldn't tell what condition he was in so I just started asking him a bunch of questions," Finney said. "By the time help had arrived, I knew more about him than I do about most of my friends."

Upon police and emergency personnel arrival, Finney communicated pertinent information regarding what she had witnessed. The victim was transported to the hospital for an evaluation. Doctors determined the man had suffered only minor injuries.

This was Finney's first real-life experience with an accident victim.

"This is what I want to do with my life," she said. "So it was good to get experience, even though it wasn't exactly how I expected it to happen."

Finney added that her mother's experience as a paramedic was influential in her helping the victim.

"Looking back, I'm sure it helped having my mom share all of these stories and experiences she's had," she said.

Finney was awarded a certificate of recognition in front of her fellow nursing students in room 325 of the Allied Health Building by Bledsoe and other officers.

"I think it's important that you recognize students for their heroic behavior," Bledsoe said. "It's the only way to send the message that it's important for the campus community to help each other."

Pioneer (Editorial)

February 3&4, 2007

Hats off to local heroes

Whether we like to think about it or not, tragedy can strike at just about any moment. Crossing a busy street. Eating dinner at a restaurant. Or working out at your regular gym.

It's good to know that here, in Big Rapids, there are still plenty of folks willing, and qualified, to help someone in need.

Take for example, the actions of Ferris State University student Kaeley Olsen and alumna Jill Newberry. The two had never met before Tuesday when they both teamed up to save the life of a 21 year-old Greenville man who collapsed in the FSU Student Recreation Center. Olsen and Newberry were exercising when they saw him collapse. The women rushed to him and began chest compressions and called 911.

Within minutes, Officer Bill Saunders administered shocks with an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). Emergency medical personnel arrived and continued the defibrillator treatment until the man was stabilized and transported to Mecosta County Medical Center. A short time later he was taken by helicopter to Spectrum Health-Butterworth Campus in Grand Rapids.

Thanks to the quick thinking of both Olsen and Newberry, the man has a chance of recovery. If they had not acted quickly, it's unclear whether the man would have gotten that chance.

Olsen and Newberry are heroes. And they are not the only ones you'll find at Ferris. Just a day after their deeds, another student was recognized for her actions following a car accident that injured a pedestrian in November.

Inspired by her mother, who is a paramedic, Jessica Finney, a nursing major in the College of Allied Health, didn't expect to be helping people in emergency situations until after graduation. When she saw the accident occur, she stopped to check the victim for injuries. After discovering he had suffered a head injury, Finney held pressure to the wound to help control the bleeding while maintaining control of the victim's neck to protect him from further injury.

She also aided the victim by speaking with him as well as completing assessment questions on him to help determine if he had sustained a concussion.

"I couldn't tell what condition he was in, so I just started asking him a bunch of questions," Finney said. "By the time help had arrived, I knew more about him than I do about most of my friends."

Upon police and emergency personnel arrival, Finney communicated pertinent information regarding what she had witnessed.

Finney was awarded a certificate of recognition Wednesday in front of her fellow nursing students in room 325 of the Allied Health Building by FSU Department of Public Safety Director Marty Bledsoe and other officers.

"I think it's important that you recognize students for their heroic behavior," Bledsoe said. "It's the only way to send the message that it's important for the campus community to help each other."

We salute all three for their bravery and selflessness. If you have not taken a CPR class, we urge you to do so. Someday, someone's life may be in your hands. Give yourself, and them, a fighting chance.