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Pioneer

September 2, 2005

Ferris unveils Homecoming 2005 theme, logo

BIG RAPIDS - In anticipation of Homecoming 2005 at Ferris State University, organizers prepared to "Ride the Tide of Bulldog Pride" Thursday as they unveiled this year's logo and theme.

Homecoming 2005 begins Oct. 9 and runs through Oct. 15 when the Bulldogs take on Northern Michigan at 2 p.m. at Top Taggart Field followed by a Homecoming Dance from 8 p.m. to midnight at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center. The dance is free and Ferris faculty, staff, students and friends are invited.

Displays of Bulldog Pride don't start here, however. A noon parade through downtown Big Rapids Oct. 15 kicks off the day with the Ferris and Big Rapids communities taking time to "Ride the Tide of Bulldog Pride" by decorating floats, banners and cars. Parade entry forms are available by contacting the Homecoming Committee through the Student Leadership and Activities Office located in the Rankin Center at Ferris or online.

"Homecoming is more than just a parade and a football game, though," Homecoming Committee Chair Holly Atherton said. "With a diverse lineup of activities throughout the week, there is bound to be something for everyone to get involved."

The slate of traditional events leading up to the parade, game and dance will begin with the Bedsheet Banner Competition Oct. 9. The application deadline is Oct. 5 and the Ferris student banners will be judged on use of the Homecoming 2005 theme, creativity and overall appearance. Prizes will be given to first- through third-place winners and banners will be displayed at the football game.

"Homecoming has always been a great way to bring together students, alumni and the Big Rapids community to celebrate Bulldog pride and we strive to carry on that tradition," Atherton added.

Next on the agenda is the Lip Sync Contest Oct. 10 at 8 p.m. in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium, followed by the Kickball Tournament Oct. 11 at 6:15 p.m. at Top Taggart Field, pep games Oct. 12 at 7 p.m. at Top Taggart Field, bonfire pep rally Oct. 13 at 8:30 p.m. and a performance by a well-known comedian Oct. 14 at 8 p.m. in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium.

Tickets will be sold at the G. Mennen Williams Auditorium Box Office for \$8 for Ferris students with student identification and \$15 for non-students.

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September 2, 2005

Fall enrollment largest in history - 12,513

BIG RAPIDS - The past, present and future of Ferris State University combined in the school's Founder's Day celebration Thursday.

"One thing we're trying to do today is connect with our roots," said FSU President David Eisler. "The exciting thing about today is when you think about FSU, you really can trace it back to a couple - Woodbridge and Helen Gillespie Ferris."

Events began with a coffee hour preceding FSU President David Eisler's address. He spoke about the beginnings of Ferris, starting with the Ferris family moving to Big Rapids on May 16, 1884. He also detailed the school's transition to a state institution. Eisler then addressed FSU's present.

"One thing we do really well is to ask our students to apply what they're learning," he said.

He also announced the start of a campaign to provide relief to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and speculated about what future efforts the university community could provide.

Eisler then moved on to discuss Ferris' future.

"These are three basic ideas to work on as a campus community," Eisler said.

He plans to talk with the entire campus community, in groups, about what values they hold as a university.

Eisler also proposed the creation of five cross-university task forces to work on encouraging transfer students, grants and external funding, technical support, student engagement and accreditation. He also spoke about a National Caucus of Alumni, which would involve alumni meetings across the state and country.

Bringing his focus back to Big Rapids, Eisler closed by noting his belief this entering class was "the best prepared in history."

He also mentioned the university has its largest fall enrollment in history - 12,513 individuals, up from 11,803 last fall.

"Everything happening at this university is a result of you ... everyone working together makes a difference for us," Eisler said.

Following his speech, the university's faculty and staff gathered in the Campus Quad for a picnic luncheon. Later that afternoon, Eisler conducted a question-and answer

session before student activities began on the Quad, including contests, dinner and the unveiling of this year's Homecoming logo and theme.

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September 3 & 4, 2005

Ferris officials report record high enrollment

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University officials are reporting a record-high enrollment of 12,547 students system-wide for the Fall 2005 semester, 744 more students than last year.

Officials say this is the first time since 1992 the university has posted an enrollment of more than 12,000 students, with Ferris State's previous high being 12,461 students in 1991.

"This is a day to celebrate," Ferris President David L. Eisler said Friday. "The idea is not to go to college but to graduate from college and I think we are retaining and have some of the best prepared students that we've ever had entering Ferris State."

First-year retention for the university's four-year students increased to 70 percent, up 335 students, and is attributable to stricter academic standards that lead to better prepared students enrolling at Ferris, officials said.

"A large part of our enrollment growth results from our higher retention rates," Ferris Vice President for Student Affairs Daniel Burcham said, adding Ferris faculty and staff should be commended for their dedication and commitment to helping the university grow.

Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University in Grand Rapids also is experiencing historic growth posting its first enrollment of more than 1,000 students with 1,036 students enrolled for the Fall 2005 semester.

The University Center for Extended Learning also is surpassing the 1,000 student mark with 1,120 Ferris students working toward their degrees from one of 26 off-campus locations.

"We knew we had a good recruiting year, but our final results were even better than expected," Burcham said. "Any excellent recruitment year is the collective work of hundreds of employees of the university. I thank them all for their dedication and commitment."

Other increases for UCEL include a 30 percent jump in the number of credit hours taken by students, which result from a combination of the launch of its new degree programs, the start of seven new program cohorts and the trend that students are taking more credits each semester, officials said.

The trend of students taking more credit hours also is extending to Ferris Grand Rapids, where officials report the number of credit hours taken by students has increased 25 percent.

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September 3 & 4, 2005

Big Rapids welcomes Ferris State students

We welcome all incoming Ferris State University students and the "veterans" returning to campus for another year of education at one of the finest universities of its kind in the country.

Big Rapids is in the midst of celebrating its 150th birthday this year and fully recognizes that the "institution on the hill" has been an integral part of our community for 121 of those years.

Woodbridge N. Ferris, the founder of Big Rapids Industrial School in September of 1884, geared his school's educational offerings to the needs of the times.

"Ferris' school was for lumberjacks, miners, farmers' sons and daughters, and girls who worked in Michigan factories..." wrote the late Joseph E. Deupree, in his 1981 history of the university, "A Century of Opportunity."

The opportunities offered by Ferris have continued as a tradition at FSU where innovation in education is mixed with the traditional academics to provide for all of the record enrollment of 12,513 students.

FSU offers associates, bachelors and masters programs that include such unique programming as auto mechanics and body work, plastics engineering, and professional golf and tennis management right along with business and teaching degrees, numerous allied health programs and the schools of pharmacy and optometry.

The goal of FSU's educational offerings is to provide knowledge and training that will make Ferris students marketable in today's working world.

When Ferris first opened his tiny school on the second floor of a building located at the northeast corner of Elm and Michigan Avenue in downtown Big Rapids, the people of Big Rapids thought he was crazy.

They questioned his political and religious convictions and wondered why he would open his school in a community that had a quality public school system.

But Ferris persevered along with those who followed as administrators and teachers at a school that has progressed from a private industrial school to a state university.

Ferris died in 1928 after an illustrious career in education, two terms as governor of Michigan and while serving as a U.S. Senator from Michigan.

But his memory lives on in the name of a university that educates thousands of students each year here in a community whose citizens barely outnumber the college students.

Sure, there are some problems common to most college towns.

But, as a whole, the people here continue to embrace each of you as members of our community and welcome you to take part in local events and activities, to worship in area churches, to share in the many outdoor attractions available in this part of the state, to shop in local stores and to participate in numerous private and public, social and governmental organizations.

We suspect that many of you will choose to stay in this community after your graduation from Ferris, just as many others have in the past. But, for the majority of you who will be with us for only a few short years, we hope you choose to be part of our community and return for many visits in future years.

Meanwhile, we invite each of you to join us at Hemlock Park at 3 p.m. today for the community's huge birthday bash sandwiched between performances of Spoon River Anthology at 2 and 7 p.m.

And don't miss out on the Labor Day Arts and Crafts Festival Monday in the same city park.

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September 8, 2005

FSU to host free family events at Ferris on Nov. 12

HERSEY - For the third year in a row, Eagle Village has been awarded a National Family Week grant from the Alliance for Children and Families with the support of The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Grant monies will fund the second annual "Connecting Families through Fun" event at Ferris State University.

Event coordinators at Eagle Village hope area families will "connect" with one another and plan to attend the free afternoon of activities scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 12, from 1-4 p.m. at Ferris.

"Connecting Families through Fun," a free, family-friendly event open to the public, is sponsored by Eagle Village foster care and adoption departments. Activities will be held at the Ferris Student Recreation Center.

In honor of National Family Week and National Adoption Month, "Connecting Families through Fun" is intended to celebrate families and increase awareness of the need for foster and adoptive parents.

Activities will include: swimming; carnival games and prizes for the kids; volleyball; basketball; family, experience-based education activities; family fun photos; information booths; giveaways and refreshments.

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Those planning to swim should bring their own towels.

For more information, please contact: (231) 832-7270 or email klockhart@eaglevillage.org.

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September 9, 2005

Ferris appoints Postema as general counsel

BIG RAPIDS - Miles J. Postema was appointed general counsel by Ferris State University President David L. Eisler. He served in the capacity of deputy general counsel since February 2000.

Postema replaces Scott Hill-Kennedy, who was elected 49th Circuit Court judge by Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm in the spring of 2005. He is a Western Michigan University graduate who obtained his Juris Doctorate from Wayne State University, where he participated in Moot Court and was a member of The Wayne Law Review.

"I feel fortunate to have worked with Scott Hill Kennedy and am excited about the opportunity to serve as general counsel for Ferris," Postema said.

In his role as deputy general counsel, Postema carries a broad range of legal experience in general business and transactional matters, as well as litigation. He began his career at Warner Norcross & Judd, specializing in general business and commercial litigation with an emphasis on employment law from 1987 to 1989. Most recently, he was a partner at Tolley VandenBosch Walton Korolewicz & Brengle, P.C. in Grand Rapids - now known as the Grand Rapids office of Foster Swift Collins & Smith - where he handled general business and transactional matters and commercial litigation from 1989 to 2000.

"Ferris State University is very fortunate to have a person of Miles' ability and experience serve as general counsel," Eisler said. "I am delighted he will be taking over this leadership role and look forward to working with him."

Added Hill-Kennedy, who served as the university's general counsel since 1994, "Miles is a recognized leader in legal matters throughout Michigan and is a recognized leader among university attorneys. He contributes in ways to help Ferris State, its faculty and staffs excel and I think he is an excellent choice for general counsel."

Postema is chair of the State Bar of Michigan Public Outreach Committee, vice-chair of the National Association of College and University Attorneys' Committee for Continuing Legal Education, and chair of the NACUA's Subcommittee Planning Group for the association's November workshop. Postema also serves on the Michigan Chapter of the American Corporate Counsel Foundation Board of Directors and the Western Michigan Legal Services Board. Elected trustee to the Rockford School Board in May, he is a member of a number of other community and professional organizations, as well.

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September 10 & 11, 2005

Ferris Board of Trustees approves grants

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Board of Trustees approved two accelerated health care training grants and a vocational and technical education grant during a special meeting of the board on Friday.

The Accelerated Health Care Training Grant in Nursing is a matching grant totaling \$302,187 and it will enable the College of Allied Health Sciences to create an Institute of Clinical Instruction in Nursing, which would address the shortage of clinical nursing faculty in undergraduate nursing programs in West Central Michigan. The semester-long, mixed delivery education program will train 12 staff nurses as clinical nurse educators, as well as include the development and implementation of a Web-based database.

The Accelerated Health Care Training Grant in Respiratory Care is a matching grant totaling \$293,910, with Ferris Grand Rapids providing the local match. This grant enables the CAHS to purchase equipment and supplies for the Grand Rapids campus and hire faculty that can teach two 18-month programs preparing 48 respiratory care graduates.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Grant totals \$408,312 and provides partial funds for two campus activities, including tutoring, special topics workshops and structured learning assistance courses; and equipment purchases for state-approved, two-year occupational education programs.

In other business, the board approved a professional services contract with RPA, Inc. of Williamsport, Pa. The executive search firm will assist Ferris with aspects of its search process for a dean of the College of Technology. The board also approved \$800,000 for Ferris' Big Rapids campus classroom renovation project; approved Lt. Col. David W. Morris to the university's slate of candidates for the Ferris Foundation Board; and approved a professional development agreement contract with the International Training Fund of the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters.

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September 10 & 11, 2005

Ferris to accept students displaced by Katrina

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University faculty, staff and students are coordinating a variety of fundraisers to help victims of Hurricane Katrina, while its campus communities are preparing to open their doors and accept students displaced by the disaster.

Ferris President David L. Eisler announced the university would admit displaced students on a visiting or provisional basis, coordinating with the individuals' home institutions. Students who paid tuition to their college or university will not be charged tuition or fees, and students who have not paid tuition will be charge Ferris' tuition - an amount which will be forwarded to the students' home institutions, Eisler said.

"As a university, we have worked to develop an approach to assist these students without disadvantaging their home institutions during this challenging time," Eisler said. "Like Americans everywhere, we have been stunned by the devastation and personal suffering caused by Hurricane Katrina. Ferris State University and the members of its campus communities want to help students displaced by Katrina and provide support to the victims of this natural disaster."

Vice President for Student Affairs Daniel Burcham said each student's situation will vary and Ferris will approach helping them on an individual basis at the university's Big Rapids campus, Ferris Grand Rapids and Kendall College of Art and Design.

"Ferris State officials will help students coordinate financial aid needs, housing assignments and educational, requirements to help situate students in their new environment," Burcham said.

There already has been an outpouring of support from the campus communities of Ferris State, with more than \$1,000 being collected in one day after university officials announced plans for relief efforts, Burcham added. Future fund-raisers, including a dance-a-thon, will be scheduled throughout the semester to raise money for hurricane victims.

Students in the Law Enforcement Academy in Ferris' School of Criminal Justice also have donated 300 khaki uniforms for Gulf Coast police officers in three Mississippi counties, including Hancock, Jackson and Harrison, said Frank Crowe, School of Criminal Justice director. The uniforms will go to officers that lost everything in the disaster but who continue to help their friends and neighbors.

"I am very proud of our students who worked hard to provide uniforms for our law enforcement personnel who continue to work together after losing everything themselves in one of the greatest natural disasters in our history," Crowe said.

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September 10 & 11, 2005

Ferris community celebrates Constitution Week

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University is participating in the first Constitution Week to teach students about the United States Constitution and the rights it provides all citizens.

A new law sponsored by Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.) and signed by President George W. Bush in April 2005 addresses the concern that many people do not know about the country's governing document. The law designates Sept. 17 through 23 Constitution Week and Sept. 17 Citizenship Day, as well as requires every school that receives federal funds - including universities - to teach students about the Constitution. Federal government agencies also are required to provide education programs to their employees.

"James Madison said it best, 'Government is of the people, for the people and by the people,'" said Connie Meinholdt, American Democracy Project coordinator and Ferris associate professor of psychology. "When people don't participate in government nothing happens ...the best approach is to engage in community activities for the common good."

Ferris' education program kicked off with an information table Monday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Rankin Center Atrium, where Ferris faculty and administrators were on hand to discuss the Constitution. The Ferris and Big Rapids communities also may test their Constitution knowledge to be entered into prize drawings. The information table will be open through Friday.

Other events scheduled throughout the week include a community outreach program: "Economic Development, Community Growth and Eminent Domain," which is being held in Business m Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. Panelists include Big Rapids Township Supervisor Maxine McClelland, Mecosta County Development Corp. Director Jonathan Scott, Mecosta County Medical Center Public Relations Manager and Big Rapids City Commissioner Tom Hogenson, eminent domain expert Carole Bos, condemnation expert Scott Timmer and an eminent domain attorney. Panelists will discuss implications of the recent Supreme Court case, Kelo vs. City of New London, broadening governments' ability to transfer ownership of private property, as well as related Michigan state laws.

The Fourth Amendment protects people against unreasonable seizures of private property. All events are free and open to the public.

Sheldon Rampton, Center for Media and Democracy director of research, will be speaking Sept. 16 at u a.m. in the Rankin Center Doom Room on freedom of speech. Wayne State University Law School Dean Dr. Frank Wu will speak on "The U.S.

Constitution and Equal Protection Under the Law" Sept. 2o at u a.m. in Science 126.

Classroom-ready videos also are being shown at noon and 3 p.m. in IRC Auditorium 4 Sept. 16 featuring U.S. Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Stephen Breyer discussing the importance of the Constitution, as well as other relevant topics. On

Sept. 16 at 1:30 p.m., NPR's Margot Adler will present an hour-long, video-cast looking at censorship in textbooks, libraries and on the Internet.