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Pioneer

October 27, 2005

Black freshman enrollment increases at University of Michigan

Minority enrollment at the University of Michigan is bouncing back after taking a hit following the U.S. Supreme Court decision that invalidated the school's undergraduate admissions policy, which awarded points based on race.

This fall's freshman class includes 443 black students - the same number as in 2002, the year before the court ruling. It's a 26 percent jump from last year, when the university had just 350 black freshmen.

Blacks make up over 7 percent of the entering class of 6,115.

"We see that as a pretty significant recovery," university spokeswoman Julie Peterson said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the number of Hispanic first-year students rose from 264 last year to 312 this fall, an 18 percent increase.

The high court upheld a general affirmative action policy at the University of Michigan's law school in its 2003 ruling but struck down the undergraduate admission formula as too rigid because it awarded points based on race.

The university adopted a new application that still considers race but does not award points. It includes new short-answer questions and an optional essay.

University officials credited aggressive recruitment efforts for this year's minority gains. But Terry Pell, an attorney for the Center for Individual Rights, said the university is still using racial preferences to boost minority enrollment.

"If it is up because the (university) lowered its admission standards for these students, that spells trouble down the road," said Pell, whose Washington, D.C.-based firm sued the university on behalf of white students.

Pioneer

November 9, 2005

Ferris history task force re-dedicates G. Mennen Williams

Auditorium

In a courtesy photo Rededication: Ferris State University President David L. Eisler and the Ferris History Commemoration Task Force re-dedicated G. Mennen Williams Auditorium during a Nov. 8 ceremony. Pictured are task force members Mary Gallagher-Eustice, Mary Kay Maclver, Beth Krueger, Jennifer Thede; President Eisler and task force members Harry Dempsey, Larry Martin, Patty Terryn, Leah Nixon, William Keller; and local artist Michael Peters, who crafted the portrait of G. Mennen Williams that will hang in the lobby. It was G. Mennen Williams' leadership and support that set the foundation for favorable legislative action in securing state-college status for Ferris Institute. On May 17, 1949, Gov. G. Mennen Williams signed the SmithVanderWerp Act making Ferris Institute a state educational institution.

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November 9, 2005

Friends of the Library general membership meeting has been set

BIG RAPIDS - The Friends of the Big Rapids Community Library are having their annual Autumn Refresher and general membership meeting on the second floor of the library on Nov. 12 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Friends have invited Librarian Lilas Van Socoyoc, who will answer questions about the successful plan to renovate the old city hall to expand needed space for the Evert library.

Elizabeth Stolarek, guest speaker for the event, will share her stories about writing her two novels. Her composition textbook, "Classical Techniques and Contemporary Arguments" will be published in 2006. Stolarek is a professor in the department of languages and literature at Ferris State University. Refreshments will be provided. The meeting is open to the public.

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November 9, 2005

Ferris' West Central Concert Band to honor Veterans Day

Big Rapids- Ferris State University's West Central Concert Band will perform its third annual concert in recognition of Veterans Day on Nov. 13 from 4 to 5p.m. in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium.

This event is free and open to the public, and tickets are available at the G. Mennen Williams Auditorium Ticket Office. People who require special assistance should contact the Ferris Music Center at 591-2501 at least one week prior to the event.

During the concert, the WCCB will recognize veterans, active military [personnel, various veteran's organizations and family members in a special music selection featuring anthems of the five branches of service. The concert will also feature the Newaygo American Legion Post 381 Ritual Team, Ferris President David L. Eisler, singer Rachel Schumann, veteran Eloise Salinger and announcer Donna Smith.

For more information about the event, contact Tracy Federoff at 591-2501. For more information about the WCCB, contact director Scott Cohen at 591-2484.

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November 9, 2005

Ferris State University's Symphony Band to perform Fall "All-American" Concert

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University's Symphony Band will perform its Fall "All-American" Concert Nov. 16 from 8 to 9 p.m. in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium.

This event is free and open to the public, and tickets are available by calling the G. Mennen Williams Auditorium Ticket Office at 591-5600. Tickets also will be available at the door the night of the concert.

The Symphony Band will play music from traditional and contemporary artists and a medley of swing tunes featuring John Philip Sousa's classic march "The Stars and Stripes Forever," along with "Jump, Jive an' Wail," "Zoot Suit Riot" and "It Don't Mean a Thing if it Ain't Got That Swing."

Currently in its debut season, the Symphony Band is sponsored by the university as part of its "Music for Life" initiative designed to enrich the lives of students by assisting them in making the transition from a high school musical setting to the world of amateur musical ensembles. By participating in musical ensembles, Ferris students not only enhance their musical skills, but they also gain inspiration by playing with other students, as well as members of the community.

Under the direction of associate music professor Scott Cohen, the band is comprised of Ferris students, adult community members and selected high school students from West Central Michigan.

For more information about the concert or to join the band, contact Cohen at 591-2484 or rscohen@ferris.edu.

Associated Press/Lansing Bureau

November 10, 2005

College Freshman numbers hit record high

LANSING -- The number of freshmen enrolled in Michigan's public universities this year broke 40,000 for the first time.

The Presidents Council, State Universities of Michigan released preliminary enrollment data today showing 40,536 first-time freshmen enrolled this fall, a 2 percent jump from last year. The number is up from 33,089 a decade ago.

"Every year we grow a little larger and a little larger," said Mike Boulus, executive director of the group, which represents the 15 public university presidents and chancellors. "We've had a steady increase year in and year out."

Boulus said the universities are taking seriously a call from Gov. Jennifer Granholm to increase the percent of Michigan's population holding college degrees or certificates, despite falling financial support from the state.

"We've got a mandate to grow our enrollment," Boulus said.

Ten universities increased the number of freshmen compared with the fall of 2004, two had about the same number and three saw freshmen decline.

Overall, total undergrad enrollment statewide was up 1 percent to 223,312.

Ferris State University, with 2,480 freshmen, has 346 more freshmen this year than last year, the largest jump in the number of new freshmen in the state. The increase reversed a 295-student drop in freshman enrollment from 2003 to 2004.

Daniel Burcham, vice president for student affairs, said Ferris' college of allied health is attracting students interested in careers in health care and students are enrolling with an eye on post-graduate work in optometry and pharmacy.

"It's one of those times you're watching enrollment and everything goes right," he said.

Burcham said one reason for the decline in 2004 was a drop in freshman scholarships offered due to budget woes. The university awarded \$1.6 million to freshmen in 2004, but restored it to \$2.1 million in 2005.

Wayne State University had the largest decline in freshmen, dropping from 3,120 last fall to 2,879 this fall.

Provost Nancy Barrett said the drop was somewhat expected because Wayne had large freshman increases in 2003 and 2004.

"We've been growing by leaps and bounds, and I think this is a correction," she said. She said the university attracted an unusual number of recent high school grads the past two years when it opened a new dormitory and added a MedStart program, guaranteeing qualified freshmen a spot in Wayne's medical school after graduation. She said Wayne had its first National Merit Scholars last year with five students. That grew to 14 National Merit Scholars this fall.

Western Michigan University, which has been trying to grow its enrollment, had about the same number of freshmen as last year, with 3,837, up four students. But its total undergrad enrollment dropped by 5 percent to 21,430 from the previous year, the largest drop in the state.

The university had a large group of students entering in 2001 and graduating last spring, accounting for the overall drop.

Western's freshman enrollment peaked in 2001 with 4,669, then dropped to 3,833 last year.

"The good news is that we've turned it around," said John Beacon, Western's vice president for enrollment management. "I consider us flat. That's where we need to be."

Beacon said he hopes to see freshman numbers climb. Western has started a number of projects aimed at growing enrollment, including e-mailing information to 100,000 Midwest high school students stressing the importance of college and open houses for select students who will be guaranteed their choice of housing.

The Grand Rapids Press

November 10, 2005

Ferris plans scholarships to honor veterans

BIG RAPIDS -- Ferris State University has a gift for students with recent military service: a \$1,000 annual scholarship good for up to four years.

Trustees are expected to approve the scholarships Friday, which is Veterans Day.

"It's a way of saying thank you," spokeswoman Leah Nixon said.

It would apply to full-time students who served six months on active duty in the previous four years. More than 100 on campus could qualify.

Separately, students from outside Michigan with similar military service would pay in-state tuition instead of nonresident rates, starting in January.

Pioneer

November 18, 2005

Pie-A-Prof helps Big Brothers Big Sisters

BIG RAPIDS - Perhaps the best lesson pre-pharmacy and pharmacy students at Ferris State University learned Tuesday morning was perseverance.

The Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity had planned its second annual Pie-A-Prof event to be a fund-raiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters. The event auctions off professors for students to throw a pie in their face.

Last year, the inaugural event raised \$92 - no small sum when bidding takes place one-quarter at a time.

This year, the results were less favorable. Due to a lack of turnout, only \$15 was raised - \$10 of which was donated by one of the pied professors.

Pasquale Diraddo, one of the fraternity advisors, stepped forward to console the group leadership.

"I'll have my students each pay \$1 and they can shave my mustache off in class this week," the chemistry professor offered.

Diraddo has no idea what he will look like without his mustache.

"I haven't seen my upper lip in 20 years," he laughed. "It'll grow back - it's reversible."

Big Brothers Big Sisters will still be aided by the fraternity, despite the Pie-A-Prof results. "Our organization does a lot for them," said Crystal Shaw, executive vice president of Kappa Psi.

"Every year, we throw a Halloween and an Easter party. And, this year we're focusing on pediatrics."

Added fraternity President Lindsey Berlinghoff, "We do other stuff for Big Brothers Big Sisters, so it will still be a helpful year for them. We're definitely going to try this again next semester."

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November 18, 2005

Ferris Board of Trustees approve Military Veterans Scholarship Program

GRAND RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Board of Trustees celebrated Veterans Day and those men and women who have served in the Armed Forces by approving a Military Veterans Scholarship Program during the board's regular meeting on Nov. 11 at Kendall College of Art and Design.

The program will provide a \$1,000 annual scholarship and waive out-of-state tuition fees for qualified veterans enrolling at Ferris. Veterans entering school in either freshman or transfer status are eligible for the scholarship, while veterans currently enrolled who meet the requirements will be offered the scholarship effective winter semester 2006. "This scholarship is one way in which Ferris can show its appreciation to our men and women in the military," said FSU President David L. Eisler. "A significant number of students have had to postpone their education due to service to their country. This is a way of helping them when they return to civilian life."

The scholarship is renewable for three additional years and the out-of-state tuition waiver continues as long as the veteran-student meets the program requirements. To receive the scholarship, veterans must have served a minimum of six consecutive months, or 180 days; on active duty status in the United States military within the last four years previous to their enrollment at Ferris.

Student-veterans also must maintain full-time academic status and be in good academic standing to receive the scholarship.

"I am proud to say Ferris State University is offering ~this scholarship," Board of Trustee Vice Chair James K. Haveman Jr. said.

Haveman understands the importance of honoring the men and women who serve their country, having served in Iraq as interim head of the Ministry of Health from June 2003 to May 2004.

"This scholarship provides university officials the opportunity to do more to thank the men and women who serve their country," he added

Pioneer

November 22, 2005

True Holiday Spirit

Local fraternity donates food: The Ferris State University's Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity donated many pounds of food from a recent food drive to The Salvation Army on Tuesday. With the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity members Mike Teubert, Rob Kelly, Zach Vizona and Josh Ison. Lambda and Chi Alpha advisor Pete Kent and Captain Jerry Henderson of The Salvation Army. (Pioneer Photo)

Pioneer

November 22, 2005

Home expo at FSU

BIG RAPIDS - There is a free home buyer expo at the West Campus Community Center, Room 100, Nov. 30 at 7 p.m. The theme for the expo is "Opening the door to a home of your own." Flagstar Bank is sponsoring the expo and encourages graduating Ferris State University students to have their questions on hand. Good questions to ask are:

Affordability; down payments; no money down loans; negotiating a price; inspections, obtaining a mortgage; and your credit. For more information, contact Dennis Hammar at (800) 900-2964

Pioneer

November 23, 2005

Rankin Gallery hosts faculty exhibit

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Rankin Art Gallery- staff is proud to present the works of Ferris and Kendall College of Art and Design art faculty through Dec. 9.

The Faculty Exhibit rotates on a yearly basis between the Kendall and Ferris campuses.

The two campuses join together to support the creativity and continued 'exploration of the artists' craft. Gallery Director Carrie Weis feels this is an inspiring way to reach the student~ of both Ferris and Kendall.

"This is a wonderful way for our students to see what we create outside of the classroom, as well as give them the opportunity to view an assortment of media, style and concepts."

Added Robert Barnum, artist in residence at the Big Rapids campus, This is the most important show of the Near presenting on credible ground, our most gifted faculty."

Please join us in celebrating the accomplishments of Ferris and Kendall's art faculty. The exhibit is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Weis at 591-2536 for further information.

Pioneer

November 23, 2005

Ferris Pharmacy fraternity sponsors stuffed animal drive

Giving this holiday season: Students of Ferris State University's Kappa Psi pharmacy fraternity recently sponsored a campus stuffed animal drive. The collection was donated to Mecosta County Medical Center for distribution to pediatric patients during the holidays. Some of the many who participated are FSU students Lindsey Berlinghoff, Josh Ghiricighelli, Crystal Shaw, Jennifer Suminski and Jason Brown. (Pioneer Photo)

Pioneer

November 25, 2005

Change in tax law assists donors in making charitable gifts

BIG RAPIDS - As the year 2005 draws to a close, Friends of Ferris State University may find a new tax law applicable when making gifts and charitable contributions to the university and other organizations.

The Katrina Emergency Relief Act of 2005 allows donors to write off up to 100 percent of their income for cash donations made from Aug. 28 through the end of the year. This tax break is significant because donors usually cannot write off more than 50 percent of their adjusted gross income in deductions for charitable contributions.

A provision of the law also allows for withdrawal of IRA funds at no penalty starting at 59 1/2. What makes this option attractive for donors wishing to take a large portion of their retirement account and donate it to charity is the 100-percent deduction ceiling.

Gifts also maybe made from 401(k) and other retirement plans. However, the 100-percent deduction ceiling makes gifts of stock a good choice. By selling the stock and making a cash gift, donors would save more from the charitable donation than what is paid in capital gains taxes.

For more information or to make a gift to Ferris State University, please contact the Ferris Foundation at (231) 591-2391 or fsufdn@ferris.edu. Details about establishing scholarships or endowments may be obtained from the Advancement Office at (231) 591-3825.

Pioneer

November 28, 2005

Man flees from police into Muskegon River Sunday morning

BIG RAPIDS - A white male thought to be in his late twenties and from Rodney jumped off the Baldwin Street bridge into the Muskegon River early Sunday morning after Big Rapids Department of Public Safety and Ferris State University campus police officers pursued him. Around 1 a.m. a cashier working at the Admiral gas station located near the PSU campus notified an on-duty officer from Ferris' DPS of a customer's failure to pay for fuel and gave a partial description of a green 1990s model Chevy Blazer. When an FSU officer attempted to pull over a vehicle matching the description it fled northbound on Northland Drive at speeds in excess of 70 miles per hour.

Officers were prepared to call off the chase at Northland Drive at 19 Mile Road when the vehicle unexpectedly turned and drove back south. At this point the Big Rapids DPS used stop sticks to flatten the vehicle's front tires. It then turned eastbound onto Baldwin Street where the subject stopped the vehicle got out and jumped off the bridge into the Muskegon River.

"At one point the subject drove his vehicle into an FSU DPS vehicle behind the old El Vaquero Restaurant," said Marty Bledsoe, director of FSU's DPS.

After the subject jumped off the bridge into the river, he spoke to officers as they tried to persuade him to come toward shore; however, the subject continued to move down the river and into deeper water.

"One of the officers attempted to grab the subject and bring him to safety as they were speaking to him in the river, but the subject moved out of reach," Bledsoe said. "He was last seen floating down river." Police tracking dogs combed the banks of the river as part of the search and rescue operation until approximately 4 a.m. when efforts were postponed until daylight. At 8 a.m. crews from both the Big Rapids and FSU DPS, the Big Rapids Fire Department, Michigan State Police, Mecosta County Sheriff's office and the Mecosta County Dive Rescue Team gathered along the river behind the Big Rapids Middle School to continue search and recovery.

"We were hoping to use the hover craft to aid in the recovery, but it's experiencing an internal engine problem," said Todd Purcell Mecosta County's Dive Rescue Team captain. "The weather is not cooperating with us today either." Rescue crews used small boats to search the river in front of Hemlock Park until around noon when the search was suspended until Monday due to poor weather conditions.

"It's too dangerous to assist divers from shore in such icy conditions," said Big Rapids DPS Director Kevin Courtney. "If the weather clears it may be possible to do a fly over in a helicopter tomorrow."

The suspect is wanted by the FSU campus police for fleeing and alluding.