

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
February 4, 2013

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## Please Help

Thanks to national and international news reporting, we are no strangers to the ravages of natural disasters. This past week, extreme shifts in weather caused extensive flooding closer to home, as the Muskegon River overflowed and forced the evacuation of residents along its banks. Suddenly lives of colleagues, friends and neighbors were turned upside down. The return of bitter cold weather is compounding the problem, preventing people from returning to their homes. Some residents are facing the likelihood that their homes will be total losses.

According to news reports, approximately sixty homes were affected by the flooding; half of these were seasonal homes unoccupied in the winter. The area most impacted by flood waters is the mile and a half stretch between Garfield Road and 11 Mile Road in Rogers Heights.

On Friday, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Jerry Scoby, chaired a meeting of Ferris employees to explore ways the university can reach out and help those in need. One of the first actions we have been able to take is to make more than 200 meal tickets for The Rock available to the Red Cross for families and individuals affected by the flooding. We are actively working with the Mecosta County chapter of the American Red Cross to help the displaced families. For students who have been affected by the flooding and not already living on campus, we are offering accommodations in our residence halls. Angela Roman, director of Career Services and Student Leadership and Activities, is helping coordinate efforts by student organizations to match student volunteer efforts to those in need. Angela will also help coordinate volunteer opportunities for faculty and staff.

Initial reports indicate that the damage, estimated to be as much \$3 million, does not qualify for federal disaster relief. As a result, your help and support are sorely needed. Those affected are likely to have long-term needs beyond this period of emergency response. If you are a member of an organization on campus or in the community, I would ask you to urge your group to assist, to lend a hand to our friends and neighbors in need.

Individually, the most efficient way to help is to donate money to existing relief organizations. If you have the means to do so, please consider a donation to the Red Cross. You can earmark your donation to go to the Mecosta County flood relief effort by contacting the Mecosta County Chapter of the American Red Cross at (231) 796-6562. You can also donate through their national website, [www.redcross.org/donate](http://www.redcross.org/donate). By clicking on "change cause" on the home page, you can direct your donation to your local chapter.

Please join me in thanking Lori Helmer and everyone in Dining Services, Angela Roman and the Volunteer Center, Nick Campau and Bill Potter who are Red Cross volunteers, Megan Thomas for helping evacuated FSU students find housing on campus, and Cindy Havens, director of the local Red Cross chapter, as well as Red Cross volunteers for their response. This list will grow as our response expands. Unfortunately, not everyone who does important work gets publicly acknowledged. On behalf of those who benefit from your goodwill, if you are among those who are working to alleviate the suffering of others, please know that your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Ours is a close-knit and caring community. I am proud of the support that Big Rapids gives to Ferris, and also proud of the support Ferris returns to Big Rapids and surrounding communities. Please join with me in making a generous donation to the Red Cross and in reaching out to citizens in our community who are in need of assistance.

Thank you for helping to make a difference for those in need.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president