

Eisler's era coming to an end

President announces he plans to retire from Ferris after June 2022

Cora Hall
Editor in Chief

President David Eisler announced Monday, March 15 that he plans to retire in June of 2022 after what will be a 19-year tenure.

Some of the most significant aspects of his presidency listed in the university press release include increasing the graduation rate to 65%, starting 15 building projects worth \$400 million and increasing the Ferris Foundation's endowment from \$18 million to \$100 million.

Eisler said in a message to campus that he "believe[s] this will be a good time for a leadership transition, and it is the right time for Patsy and me."

"Working at Ferris State University is a privilege, and it has been my honor to serve as your president over the past 18 years," Eisler wrote. "This is a great university, with a unique and special mission that provides life-changing opportunities."

He will leave as the university's longest serving president besides its founder, Woodbridge N. Ferris, which physical sciences professor and Ferris Faculty Association Charles Bacon called "quite an accomplishment." Bacon, who has been at Ferris for 37 years, said he had not expected Eisler to retire for a couple more years.

"This is a little faster than I thought," Bacon said. "But he had some goals he wanted to accomplish, and I guess he's accomplished what he wants to do."

"I think people need to give credit to folks that are willing to step up into leadership positions like that, that are difficult and they're going to go through good times and bad times."

Though Bacon said he enjoyed working with Eisler, he wished there would have been more focus towards running and maintaining programs in recent years.

"Administrations always love building projects because they can point to a building to say, I built that," Bacon said. "So we would have preferred a little stronger focus on the employees over the last five years, but that's just the way it is. They'd rather build buildings than build people."

Political science professor David Takitaki saw the university's change firsthand, having visited the campus as a high schooler. He said when he returned 20 years later in 2017 for his interview process, he didn't recognize campus.

"The growth and change that happened in those 20 years were absolutely phenomenal," Takitaki said.

Amna Seibold, the chair of Ferris' Board of Trustees, said one of Eisler's successes in the big picture is the university's increased presence in Grand Rapids with Kendall School of Art and other satellite programs there.

"That has really been a strength and a change for Ferris and he has broadened the urban portion of Ferris State University and that was driven in large part by Dave Eisler, making those contacts and bringing those things forward," Seibold said.

Since he was hired as president in 2003, Eisler has led the university through significant nationwide challenges, most recently being the COVID-19 pandemic. Communications professor and academic senate president Sandra Alspach said she has worked with Eisler in various settings throughout his time at Ferris, and he has "kept the ship afloat through many a storm."

"Even though I haven't always agreed with his decisions, perhaps because I didn't see the charts he followed, we've seen the University in full sail moving forward and surviving a pandemic tempest during his watch," Alspach said.

Nursing professor Mary Beaudry said Eisler's strength was his connection with the community and was impressed with his leadership through the pandemic.

"Dr. Eisler kept us on task, yet recognizes the challenge that COVID-19 provided. Communication turned out to be an important part of his job," Beaudry said. "In addition, he is a comforting presence when we were all going through such chaos."

Takitaki has worked at two universities previously and called 18 years a long run for any president. There has been significant challenges in higher education the past few years in Takitaki's eyes and if Eisler was looking for a time to transition leadership after seeing the university through them, "this maybe is the right window."

Among Eisler's accomplishments there were also shortcomings, such as the strained FFA contract negotiations that led to a strike on the first day of classes in the fall of 2018. There was also two different votes of no confidence by the FFA, the second of which in 2018 resulted in 88.5% of FFA members voting that they had no confidence in Eisler's leadership. It was Eisler's fourth round of contract negotiations with the FFA as president, and it left a bitter taste in some members' mouths, such as mathematics professor Holly Price.

"With respect to Dr. Eisler as a president, I'm going to follow the rule, 'If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all,'" Price said. "With respect to the next president, I hope it's someone who respects the uniqueness of Ferris State and better supports the programs, activities, and people that make it special."

Bacon said he and Eisler would always disagree on priorities, as is the nature of labor management relations, but he believes Eisler has done good things for the university.



Torch File Photo

President David Eisler, who has served at Ferris since 2003, announced he will retire after June of 2022.

"I like Dave personally, I've enjoyed our interactions," Bacon said. "I've kind of put the union stuff off to the side because that's just business, it's just the way it is but as a person, I've enjoyed working with him and he's a nice guy."

While a president can never make everyone happy, Seibold said Eisler's focus was always on what was best for the university.

"I will say that the job of a university president is never easy," Seibold said. "He is the lightning rod for all things. He is in the middle of all things, and he has the enviable job of trying to keep the board happy, the faculty happy, the students happy, the staff happy and the community happy... and there are always competing priorities and someone ends up feeling left out."

According to Seibold, the search for the next university president has yet to begin, and the board has yet to choose the search

firms in charge of the candidate pools. In Bacon's eyes, search firms often "lead to a lack of transparency" in the process, however, Seibold said the search firms were to ensure the process "is as transparent as it is supposed to be."

As far as the next university president goes, Bacon hopes they'll find a candidate who has leadership experience in higher education, someone who has worked with unions before and who involves the faculty in decisions because "it's a tiring process all the time having to fight."

Takitaki is looking for leadership that puts the student experience first, which he considers to largely be dependent on having the right people in crucial faculty positions so students have "the support they need."

According to Seibold the search for the next Ferris president will begin in the coming months.

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NEWS

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Vaccines for all

Gov. Whitmer announces everyone 16 older can be vaccinated starting April 5

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

The COVID-19 vaccine is about to become widely available across the state of Michigan with the announcement that the original phasing plan is being abandoned.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Friday, March 12 that every Michigander age 16 and older will become eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine starting Monday, April 5. Before this announcement, Michigan was not projected to get through all phases until late August or early September.

The press release from the governor's office and MDHHS also stated that any person 16 years old or older that suffer from a qualifying medical condition can receive their vaccine as soon as March 22.

"I urge all eligible Michiganders to get one of the three COVID-19 vaccines. It is essential to getting our country back to normal ... And as always: mask up, practice safe social distancing and avoid large indoor gatherings where COVID-19 can easily spread from person to person. We will eliminate this virus together," Gov. Whitmer said.

Ferris students, staff and faculty residing in Big Rapids will have several options for where to get their vaccine. COVID-19 vaccine appointments are currently available at Meijer, Rite Aid, Spectrum Health and Walgreens.

Walmart is reportedly also going to start offering the vaccine at its Michigan pharmacies in the coming weeks as more doses become available for the state.

"Over 2.7 million doses of the safe and effective COVID vaccines have been ad-

ministered in Michigan, and we are well on our way to vaccinating 70% of Michiganders age 16 and up," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at MDHHS. "We are pleased to lay out our plan for when every Michigander age 16 and up will be able to get a vaccine. We will continue to focus our efforts on removing barriers to access for our most vulnerable to exposure and those at highest risk of severe illness due to COVID-19. These vaccines are the way we are going to end this pandemic and I urge Michiganders to make a plan to get your vaccine when you are eligible."

This announcement comes just days after the CDC announced updated COVID-19 social distancing guidelines to include that anyone that is fully vaccinated may remove their masks indoors if they are with other fully vaccinated individuals.

Ready, set, give

Ferris fundraising event returns after one-year hiatus

Rebecca VanderKooi
News Reporter

The One Day for Dawgs online fundraising event for groups on campus is taking place April 14, and there's still time for more programs to join.

So far 30 groups in categories ranging from e-sports to disability services have signed up to participate in this year's event.

Megan Eppley, a communications expert at Ferris, is helping to put on the fundraiser. She explained that it's free for groups to join this event, and there is still time for others to get involved.

"We have until March 24 to set up a team. After that, it's harder to market and get everything together in time for the event," Eppley said.

Last year the event was canceled due to COVID-19, but Eppley explained that in 2019 the 24-hour fundraising event raised over \$94,000 between the 35 groups participating.

One of the groups participating this year is Educational Counseling & Disabilities Services (ECDS), which is overseen by Julie Alexander, along with the Committee for Students with Disabilities (LCSD) in which Alexander is the chair of.

These departments provide accommodations for students. College costs are rising, and Alexander explained that they realize with medical expenses, equipment, personal attendants and other costs it can make paying for college especially challenging for students with disabilities.

"ECDS and LCSD are currently campaigning to raise money for an endowed scholarship for students with disabilities. One Day for Dawgs is a great opportunity for us to make the Ferris community aware of these issues and an opportunity to give to this cause," Alexander said.

According to Alexander, their goal is to raise \$2,500 at the April 14 event. However, the plan is to continue campaigning until they reach \$12,500. At that point the Ferris Foundation will match the funds to make an endowment.

Dave McCall is another individual involved with One Day for Dawgs. He is an associate professor in Developmental Curriculum and is heading up the First-Gen initiative at Ferris.

"I think first generation students are really the heart and soul of Ferris and represent the long-standing traditions that this school was built upon - providing opportunity for all," McCall said.

McCall explained that they are participating in the fundraiser for the newly established First-Generation Student Scholarship.

"Our hope is to eventually raise enough money to create an endowed scholarship that will support first generation students for years to come," McCall said.

Whether individuals can give or not, Eppley encourages people to share this event on social media to get the word out about it.

"It's just a really good opportunity for a lot of people to come together to support groups all over campus," Eppley said.

If you're interested in having your group join this event, email Megan Eppley at meganeppley@ferris.edu. To take part in donating to this event on April 14, go to the event website at ferris.edu/1day4dawgs or text ODFD to 71777.

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THIS WEEK IN MICHIGAN NEWS

Catch up on news around the state



Noah Kurkjian & Brendan Sanders
News Editor, Sports Editor

Capitol Hill

MICH. — Sen. Lana Theis, R-Brighton and 12 other Republicans proposed a bill late last week that would bar transgender students from being able to play on the team of their gender identity according to the Detroit Free Press.

"If the school designates a team in an interscholastic athletic activity offered to pupils enrolled at the school as a girls', women's, or female team, a requirement that each pupil who competes for a position on that team or who is selected to compete on that team must be female based on biological sex," the bill states.

Currently there is no guidance as to enforcement or penalty for schools that do not follow the potential rule.

"As a society, we fought for generations to ensure girls and women, through Title IX, have an equal opportunity to compete in athletics on a level playing field," Theis said in a statement Wednesday afternoon.

"Sadly, today, identity politics threatens all that was sacrificed and gained. Across our country, biological females are losing opportunities at titles, records, scholarships and, at times, participation itself."

Erin Knott, president of LGBTQ advocacy organization Equality Michigan argued that this bill hurts young, vulnerable people and it may be unconstitutional.

"Kids learn a lot of important life lessons in sports: leadership, confidence, self-respect, and what it means to be part of a team," Knott said.

"School officials shouldn't treat a transgender female student as a girl between 8 a.m.-3 p.m. and then treat her like she's a boy when sports practice starts. It's deeply hurtful to the student and disrupts the school's policy of treating all kids fairly."

In a statement Monday, the Michigan High School Athletic Association said that the legislation was "unnecessary" citing they only needed to use their transgender athlete policy 10 times in the last five years.

The likelihood of the passage of this bill is still uncertain at this time.

Sports

EAST LANSING — On Thursday, March 11, Michigan State, who was the No. 9 seed in the Big Ten tournament, took on No. 8 seed Maryland. They would fall to Maryland with a 68 – 57 loss.

Sophomore forward Malik Hall led the Spartans on the day with 19 points to go with five rebounds. Junior forward Aaron Henry placed second on the team with 12 points and nine rebounds. These were the only two players to score double digits for the Spartans.

Maryland junior guard Eric Ayala led all players with 21 points, along with leading the team in rebounds with nine, and assists with four. Junior guard Aaron Wiggins scored 19 points on the evening.

With the loss, Michigan State still made the NCAA Tournament as a first four out, play-in game. As an 11 seed, they will take on UCLA as a play in game. The winner of the matchup will No. 6 seeded BYU in the round of 64. The game will take place Thursday, March 18 at 10 p.m.

ANN ARBOR — Michigan came one point away from punching their ticket to the Big Ten championship on Saturday, March 13. The No. 1 seeded Wolverines took on the Buckeyes of Ohio State in a rematch of their late season matchup that saw Michigan come out on top. This time would be different.

After Mike Smith missed the final shot, Michigan fell to the Buckeyes, 68 – 67, sending Ohio State to the Big Ten championship against Illinois.

Freshman center Hunter Dickinson led the Wolverines in scoring with 21 points. He also notched eight rebounds on 9-14 shooting. Senior guard Eli Brooks scored 12 points on the evening while senior guard Mike Smith scored 10 points.

For Ohio State, junior guard Duane Washington led all teams in scoring, with 24 points on the night. He also led the team in rebounds with six. Sophomore forward EJ Liddell would follow Washington up with 18 points of his own with five rebounds and three assists.

Despite the loss, Michigan was placed as a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament, where they will face the winner of the play in game between Texas Southern and Mount St. Mary's. The game will take place Saturday, March 20 at 3 p.m.

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- ON THE RECORD -

A roundup of this week's crime at Ferris State University

McDUI

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Plate problems

March 10, 5:00 a.m., a license plate was reported missing from a vehicle in Lot 61. Officers and the student are unsure as to whether the plate was stolen or if it came off in a car wash that the student went into prior.

McDUI

March 14, 4:23 a.m., officers were dispatched to McDonalds on South State Street for a reported drunk driver. Officers arrived on scene for the suspect to blow a .17, over twice the legal limit. The suspect was arrested and charged with a misdemeanor.

Torch Corrections

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Ferris State Torch Corrections

Students with accessibility issues left waiting

In this story last week, The Torch mistakenly attributed part of a quote to Kalina Mohnke. The quote "If I had to go to the IRC computer lab, I would kind of have to fight my way through the snow to get to the lab," was said by Dustin Norman.

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The nurturing side of cannabis

Big Rapids' new provisioning center stands out with personalized care

Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

Mother Nurtures provisioning center is now open, making it Big Rapids' eighth functioning marijuana dispensary.

This new establishment provides indica, sativa and hybrid as well as cannabidiol-infused products for both medical and adult recreational use. This includes flowers, extracts, vape cartridges and edibles, as well as many other products.

Buyers may order products online for curbside pickup or come inside to experience Mother Nurtures specialized customer service.

Manager Shaun Barsic stated that the company steers away from a bland and impersonal "Apple store" retail experience.

"Customer service is lacking in some provisioning centers throughout Michigan. It is very important to us that all of our patients and customers feel at home and at ease," Barsic said. "We think a first-time experience within a provisioning center can be very intimidating, especially for first time seniors who have heard all of the negative propaganda that the government has given over the last 70 or 80 years."

Every one of Mother Nurtures customers and patients gets individual attention from consultants known as "bud-tenders."

"Our patients are able to go as fast or as slow as they would like. And we really want to drill down on their needs and their ailments. [We want to] get to know them, not only as patients and customers but as friends, part of our bigger family here," Barsic said.

Bud-tender Cameron Evans stated that this practice directly improves the customers' relationship with cannabis.

"It helps people, because it no longer just becomes, you know, a drug. It's more of like something that people can use to help improve their lifestyle," Evans said.

While Mother Nurtures has only been in open since Feb. 19, Barsic and founder Michael Vlasich have been in the business for years.

Both Barsic and Vlasich's mothers fought cancer twice and passed within a year of each other. During her second bout,

Barsic's mother used cannabis as a therapeutic coping tool in place of traditional painkillers.

"It really gave her more quality of life, as opposed to the many opioids and painkillers that are prescribed to cancer patients going through the same thing," Barsic said. "She definitely was helped by gaining appetite, and not being comatose [like] opioids make you very often. In her last phase we were still able to have conversations, and she was really more coherent than we had seen her in the past."

This inspired the pair to take their customer service background and dive into the benefits of cannabis.

Under the Medical Marijuana Act of 2008, Barsic was able to begin as a medical marijuana (MMJ) caregiver. According to Revolutionary Clinics, MMJ caregivers provide healthcare assistance to a qualified MMJ patient by helping them obtain and administer marijuana treatments.

Bud-tender Evans also joined the industry after forming a close relationship with medical marijuana.

"I've used marijuana to help my lifestyle. I had a major knee surgery, almost replaced it, from high school athletics. It just like, it crippled me. I gained a bunch of weight. I wasn't able to like handle the pain, so I wasn't working out again. And so when I was introduced to marijuana, I really wanted to help other people," Evans said.

To truly help other people, Mother Nurtures says they take the threat of COVID-19 very seriously. The pandemic delayed the opening of the dispensary by six months.

"The state just wanted to make sure that when we did open, we were going to open safely for both our employees and team members, as well as the patients and guests that are walking in," Barsic said. "We are very diligent in sanitizing all areas after each and every person walks in the place. We do morning checks of our staff and make sure that they are in good health, as well as temperature checks."

Barsic and Evans agree that the future of Mother Nurtures is bright. The company hopes to make a difference in the Big Rapids community and eventually expand with multiple operations within the next year.



Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Manager Shaun Barsic strives to create a comfortable, unique shopping experience for his customers.



Photo by: Dylan Bowden | Torch Photographer

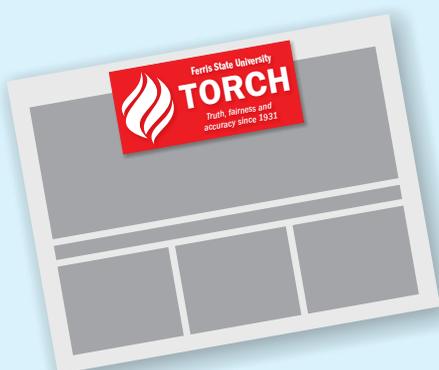
Mother Nurture aims to treat its customers specific needs and avoid the "Apple store" experience.

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LIFESTYLES

Marissa Russell | *Lifestyles Editor* | russem22@ferris.edu

Preparing for success

TDMP program goes beyond teaching just filming techniques

Marissa Russell
Lifestyles Editor

Lights. Camera. Action.

Television and Digital Media Production students live and breathe this phrase. From recording and producing TV shows, to having six-month-long internships, Ferris tries to make students in this program well-rounded and ready for real life work.

TDMP students are taught not only how to become visual storytellers but also learn how to market themselves and learn different aspects in the media world.

From making their own TV shows to recording live sports, students are allowed a lot of hands on experience. The studio class has four different TV shows, almost all of them are produced every week. Students rotate roles to allow more work place experience with tight deadlines.

Behind the scenes

Davis Fosgitt didn't originally plan on coming to Ferris. Fosgitt had planned on going to Northern Michigan but, due to the fact his mother worked for Ferris, Fosgitt decided to give the TDMP program a chance.

"I was originally wanting to go for just film, so I would just go and learn how to make movies not necessarily do a TV broadcast or anything," Fosgitt said. "But learning all of the stuff that goes into a broadcast is huge, because I've now learned so much... I'm just becoming more well-rounded and more media fluent basically."

Fosgitt recommends TDMP over specialized majors for anyone thinking about going into something like film or animation. Fosgitt said students can end up being better worker or being better in the field than the average person because they have all of the different aspects in the TDMP classes. Because Fosgitt is a first semester junior, he has some ways to go in his classes.

"I haven't been in the remote production class yet," Fosgitt said. "That's a big one because you're getting hands on experience with cameras and working in the trailer with either graphics, technical directing replay or audio."

There is also the studio production class, which is a really good one for that experience, in Fosgitt's opinion. Every week students are producing two shows, and they are either working a camera, directing, technical directing, producing or doing some role like that and it rotates around for that.

"We've got one class that I'm really excited for. We've got Doc, which is where you do like mini documentaries or just learn how to tell a story better," Fosgitt said.

Students are also get exposure to professors who have experience in the industry and real world situations. Fosgitt said all of his professors have done their own thing and done it successfully or have worked for somebody in the industry before. His current mentor is his professor, Andrew Tingley, who also helps him shoot film for Ferris athletics.



Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Ferris Out Loud and other TDMP shows allows students to get a real life experience producing their own shows.

More than a professor

Tingley is an adjunct instructor who originally got his Bachelors degree at Ferris in 2004. The first time Tingley taught at Ferris was in 2007 where he began teaching computer animation for video, or 3D animation, and then compositing for video.

Tingley taught these for two years until his company took off and he had to give up his teaching roll and focus on his company in Grand Rapids. Tingley's first video production company was called Creo Productions, which started in Grand Rapids, and that lasted from 2006 until 2011.

"At that point my business partner and I wanted to do different things, we wanted to essentially take the company in different directions," Tingley said. "So actually, we both shut down that business entirely and we both started our own production companies because I was more focused on cinematography, and that's when I started Cinerrific!"

The Cinerrific! motto is, "We exist to create videos that serve a purpose." They provide clients with full service video production including pre-production, production and post-production. Pre-production meaning scripting and storyboarding and production as in the directing and cinematography done during shoot. Editing, motion graphics and animation is where post production finishes the process.

Because Tingley has had a lot of experiences with his businesses, Fosgitt likes to go to him whenever he has questions about his own business, Talen Media. Talen Media is a small advertisement business based out of Bay City ran by Fosgitt and two of his high school best friends.

Getting real world experience

Ferris associate professor and internship coordinator Joshua Pardon said that the TDMP internship program has been placing students into quality internship experiences for over 40 years. Their network of internship placement sites is national in scope and the program has its own Internship Coordinator who mentors and places students into these opportunities. All TDMP students who complete the degree program will graduate with six months of work experience, an online visual portfolio featuring a video demo reel, and a polished professional resume.

Internship sites can range from small independent production companies, television networks and stations, larger film production studios, sports teams, and large corporations with their own in-house media production operations.

The TDMP internship is six months long, during which time Ferris interns are expected to log 1,000 hours of work time on-site. Most other college programs in the media production field are three months or less.

Pardon feels that their approach to internship gives students an advantage over the competition. Interns are actively involved with a variety of production activities at their internship sites.

Throughout the duration of the internship, the intern is assigned a TDMP faculty supervisor, who stays in close contact with them, grades their weekly work and visits with them twice to evaluate their performance on-site.

"I feel that our broad-based curriculum and our internship program are both a big part of that success," Pardon said.

Pardon said that the fact that the internship program is a "capstone" experience is a major factor. The six-month internship occurs at the end of the student's time in the program after the completion of all other coursework. This facilitates the "school-to-work" transition better than other internships in the media production field which often occur during the summer in between junior and senior year.

The TDMP broad-based curriculum gives students experience in all aspects of media production, according to Pardon. This includes anything from studio television production, to animation, to scriptwriting.

"I think that the TDMP program's approach to curriculum and learning is the right approach for today's job market," Pardon said. "Students in all fields need to be versatile and resilient in a 21st Century job market, because change will be the only constant in their careers. For this reason, our program doesn't take a strictly "film school" approach or "broadcasting school" approach to the subject matter.

"We feel that this makes our graduates more adaptable with their skill set, and over the long term, more successful in their careers."

Fosgitt plans to try and get an internship in either Washington D.C. or New York and learn how to be visual storyteller. He wants to leave a legacy, something that people still watch decades after its created.

"What's something that you can leave behind after you're gone," Fosgitt asked. "What is something that somebody could have died but people are still consuming what they've created? If it's a good enough story it's going to be around for a long time. I want to leave a legacy."

The married student life

A personal look at love for Ferris students

Alyssa Hubbard
Lifestyles Reporter

Although Millennials and Generation Z are deciding to marry later in life, that doesn't stop students from following their hearts earlier than expected.

According to The Guardian, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) recorded in 2017 that heterosexual women are getting married around the age of 36 and men, 38.

As time goes on and different generations are born, people are choosing to get married later in life than in the past. The National Vital Statistics System reported that in the late 1960's, women were getting married around 20 years old and men, around age 23.

However, true love has not stopped a few Ferris students from following their hearts and getting married younger than "the normal age."

Holly (age 22) and James (age 21) Bryant are recently married Ferris students who are pleased with their decision to get married younger than the average age for Americans.

"Through my personal experience, being married at this age is weird," elementary education senior Holly Bryant said. "There have been times where I'll go out with my friends and I'll mention to someone I just met that I'm married and I'll kind of get a weird look. It's not like I regret it; it's just not a normal thing, not a bad thing necessarily."

Holly and James were high school sweethearts, who went to their junior proms together. They had been together for 3 - 4 years before they got engaged in 2019. The happy couple officially wed on July 24, 2020.

A relationship like the Bryant's is rare to find. According to Brandon Gaille Marketing, only 2% of high

school relationships result in marriage. In the 1940's, it was more common to marry a high school love or first love.

Facility management senior August Lee met her fiancé Darren O'Malley through some mutual friends when she was a freshman at Ferris. This couple dated for three years before they got engaged. Lee and O'Malley plan to get married later this year on Oct. 23, 2021.

Lee knew that O'Malley was the one for her when, even during a fight or Lee's darkest moments, O'Malley still found a way to make her laugh and smile. He's never judged her for it and always welcomes Lee with open arms, which Lee is so thankful for.

"We've gone through so much together in the short three years that we've been together, and we've always made it through," Lee said. "It hasn't always been easy, but it has just proven to me that Darren truly is my best friend and that I'm so excited to go through the good, bad and ugly with him."

People have joked with the Bryants that they're too young to be married, but they've never received hate for their choice. Because more people are deciding to marry at an older age, there's a certain perception surrounding the concept of getting married young, especially as college students.

"College is a time to go out and find yourself, be single. Honestly, everyone's on their own journey. What works for some people won't work for others," Holly said.

Because marrying young seems a bit "old-fashioned" to many other people now, it can sometimes be hard to understand why people still choose this lifestyle.

"I think people get weird about marrying young because it's viewed as people 'rushing' into things or that 'we have our whole

lives for that' but I think when it's the right person, you just know and that shouldn't be viewed a certain way," Lee said.

Although being young and in love is a thrill, it does come with its fair share of obstacles.

Lee mentioned that planning a wedding and "all the fun stuff" can be hard to balance while studying for classes.

Because the Bryants will be graduating from Ferris soon, they're worried about finding jobs that are close to each other.

Regardless of trials, both couples are pleased that they've found someone they wanted to spend the rest of their lives with.

Lee and Holly shared their wise counsel for anyone who feels like they "need" to get married young, or by a certain age.

"Everybody has different things that work in their life," Holly said. "I've had so many people come up to me and say 'I wish I had you and James' relationship', 'I want a boyfriend.' There's no right or wrong way to do life. It made sense for us to get married. It might not make sense for someone else to marry until they're 30 or 40. It's just what works for you."

"I've never thought that marriage should come at a certain age, because when you know you know but I do think that you should put a lot of thought into it because marriage is a big deal," Lee said.

"This is the person you are going to spend your whole life with, and life isn't always easy. You have to be willing to fight when things get hard and be able to work when it's not always easy and it's also not always hard parts, but you have your whole lives to be together. You have to make sure that, that person is who you want to spend your whole life with."

Events calendar

WEDNESDAY

March 17

St. Patrick's Day

First-Gen Wednesday Workshops - Social Capital

Contact: Dave McCall
davidmccall@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 12 - 12:30 p.m.

LGBTQ+ Resource Center Coffee House

Contact: Sarah Doherty
SarahDoherty@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 4 - 6 p.m.

Free Ice Skate

Contact: CLACS
clacs@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 10 p.m. - 12 a.m.



THURSDAY

March 18

Tune in with Teresa featuring Matt Lauckner Take II

Contact: Teresa Fogel
clacs@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 1 - 1:30 p.m.

NoBODY is Perfect

Contact: Sarah Doherty
SarahDoherty@ferris.edu
Location: Zoom
Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.



BINGO

15	27	42	55	72
10	29	41	56	73
7	26	Free Space	52	64
13	21	36	59	61
8	23	32	58	74

FRIDAY

March 19

Virtual Grocery Bingo

Contact: Lane Steffke
steffkl@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 7 - 8 p.m.

TUESDAY

March 23

Angels of Action Paper Sack Decorating

Contact: CLACS@ferris.edu
Location: CLACS
Time: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Women of Achievement

Contact: Darnell Lewis
darnellewis@ferris.edu
Location: Zoom
Time: 6 - 7 p.m.

Roll With Me: A Virtual Film Screening

Contact: Julie Alexander
JulieAlexander@ferris.edu
Location: Zoom
Time: 6:30 - 9 p.m.



For more events, check out calendar.ferris.edu

Graphics made by Production Manager Charlie Zitta

TUNE IN TO OUR PODCAST: THE FIREPIT

HOSTED BY:

MARISSA RUSSELL, BRENDAN SANDERS &

NOAH KURKJIAN

SCAN THE SPOTIFY LINK TO
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The pandemic-aversary

A look back at a year of COVID-19 precautions

Kendall Rooks
Lifestyles Reporter

Anniversaries are an opportunity to recognize important events in our lives, both good and bad, and reflect at how they have shaped us. This month there will be no shortage of anniversaries. The biggest anniversary in question was March 11, 2020 the day the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

There are also smaller anniversaries such as, the day some students left for spring break for the last time, the day the offices closed, or the last time seeing a family member in person. A year later we are looking back at the start of the pandemic and how it continues to affect us to this day.

"As someone in healthcare and nursing education, it's never really a surprise to hear about a new virus or potential epidemic or pandemic." nursing professor Sharon Colley said, "The response to COVID-19 was much more extensive and global in nature than what we've seen in our lifetime so that was alarming in terms of the seriousness of the situation. I did not envision when this began that a year later multiple vaccines would be available."

Ferris students were much more surprised by the appearance of COVID-19 than Colley. Construction management junior Chase Kapron never anticipated the way COVID-19 would effect everything, "I didn't think the whole world would be shutting down when the virus first started to spread. I also didn't think classes were going to go fully online right away."

Nursing freshman Kristine Possehn figured the pandemic would blow over quickly when it first began to spread, "I thought everyday life would continue after a couple of weeks. I never once thought that we would still be fighting COVID-19, or that it would still be a worldwide pandemic a year later."



Photo by: Becca Witowski | Torch Photographer

Students reflect on a year of being in the pandemic.

Looking back on the pandemic reminds people of the damage and sad moments that a deadly disease can cause. The effects of the pandemic were different for everyone and for Possehn it meant missing out on a lot of high school memories prior to coming to Ferris.

"I missed quite a bit of my senior year due to the pandemic and never got to finish my last season of spring sports. I

would have liked to enjoy prom one last time and get to grow closer with all of my friends before they went to college."

Kapron felt he lost opportunities as well due to the pandemic. "I missed out on a summer internship last summer that kind of changed my plans for the whole summer. Even though my internship got pushed to this summer it still would have been nice to have had two internships for more experience."

Colley said, "The saddest part for me personally was losing my father, my mother-in-law and cousin and not being able to have true funerals or family gatherings. So many people couldn't grieve in the usual way or even derive comfort from family or friends during the past year and that is very sad and may have long term effects that remain to be seen."

Colley explained that her experience with the pandemic has made her more aware of mental health and how something like COVID-19 and the isolation it brought can affect a person. "My background is in mental health nursing and I'm aware that good mental health care is consistently less available than medical care. However, increasing the use of telehealth for patients in all areas of healthcare has been a welcome addition and has increased access and options for many."

Vaccines are rolling out to the general public and there is a glimmer of normalcy in our future.

Possehn is also excited to hang out with her friends and family in large numbers again. "I hope to be able to attend more sporting events and cheer on my favorite sports teams, go to the movies, concerts and get back to life again."

With the vaccines coming and restrictions being lifted Colley is looking forward to doing the normal things in life again like visiting family and going shopping without a mask. "...mostly just not thinking about this pandemic every day."

Student reading habits in 2021

Are students still reading during this chaotic time?

Meghan Hartley
Freelance Reporter

Moving deeper into the digital age where social media consumes our everyday lives, messaging has become instantaneous and news is absorbed in seconds, one has to wonder, is reading going out of style?

Taking time out of one's day to read an article from top to bottom, or a book from front to back, seems like a tedious task as the world keeps moving and there is no end to the amount of work received.

Students, in particular, are given a lot to juggle in one day hoping to complete it all to earn a degree. However, are they as eager to pick up a book and read stories that take them away from their busy lives as they are for their degree?

At FLITE the number of books physically checked out has gone down drastically from 2,048 books in the 2019-2020 school year to 297 books in this current school year. Sections these books have been pulled from have been for academic use, such as history, technology, social sciences and medicine, not books to be read for pleasure.

Librarian Frances Rosen said there has not been a lot of circulation happening, as one might imagine with restrictions that have taken place at the library.

Looking only at numbers from the library, one might assume students' interest in reading has gone down, however that is not the case for everyone.

Mechanical engineering major Damion Ball said he is eager to read a few fantasy series he owns on hard copy and on his kindle as they help him escape from the stresses of school.

"I'm reading a series called 'The Summoner', I have that one on hardcover," Ball said " But I'm reading more on my kindle because there is more variety without having to go to the library or search online for books."

Ball said having a kindle is much more convenient than going to an actual bookstore because the stories are right at his fingertips, he doesn't have to worry about the condition the book is in and he is given recommendations constantly for other stories based on his interests.



Photo by: Dylan Bowden | Torch Photographer

Most students learn in elementary school that March is reading month and continue the tradition even in college.

As it turns out, it's not a question of if students are wanting to read, it's more of a question as to how they want to read. More students are reaching for their tablets and electronics to read out of convenience and how fast they are able to find their next book that suits their interest.

Especially now, reading for students has become a new outlet for them to escape from their work, mentally relax and enjoy a story they won't later have to take a test on.

Architecture major Janette Woodbridge is one student who has continuously been reading since the beginning of school, saying she has more time to read. It's become more exciting to read and it takes away the worries of COVID-19.

"I am reading more now," Woodbridge said "I try to read a few chapters before I go to sleep, typically reading adventure books. It in general helps me get out of my head."

With March the reading month upon us, we are encouraged to read more this month and celebrate the incredible stories we have grown up with and the stories that have shaped society.

Reading can broaden students horizons, take them to new places, let them escape from the stresses of their everyday lives and who couldn't use a good distraction.

OPINIONS

Cora Hall | Editor in Chief | hallc36@ferris.edu

The Ferris State *Torch* is published on 27 Wednesdays throughout the academic year. This student-run newspaper is printed by The Pioneer Group.

OUR LOCATION
Alumni Building 013
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Big Rapids, MI 49307
fsutorch.com/letter-to-the-editor/

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: The year of YouTube graduations

By Cora Hall

On March 13, 2020, I couldn't have imagined what the next 365 days would hold.

A year ago today, I thought we would be back to "normal" by the time school started, and there was no way I'd be missing out on an in-person graduation.

Now, if you offered me an in-person graduation, I don't think I would even consider it.

Last week, I went to the University Center for our graduation fair to pick up my diploma sleeve and a cap and gown for photos. All to watch my graduation on YouTube. I picked up my cords and bought myself an alumni sticker and sweatshirt, as if I needed another to add to my Ferris collection.

There was a strange dissonance between picking up graduation regalia like it was any other year, only to wear it in our living room with my family. It's a weird contrast to hear that a friend's college graduation in Missouri is going with an in-person ceremony when we've assumed since the fall we wouldn't have a chance.

It's extraordinary how much your perspective can change in a year. Think back to your mindset a year ago; do you even recognize the way you were thinking? I truly had no idea what to expect when then precautionary lockdowns were being enforced; I did not expect it to take so many lives, so many experiences and life events until now.

I went from being one of the most extroverted people of my friends to an introverted homebody. I feel like I have been working round the clock all school year during a pan-

demic. Like many people I know, I'm exhausted.

Our lives have been inextricably shifted in a significant way this past year. Our entire way of living changed, our social interactions changed and, consequently, so have our perspectives. It's sometimes difficult to imagine what it was like to live without thinking about how many times I wash my hands, how many masks I have washed and how many people I see in a week.

I feel like we are all wondering 'when things will go fully back to normal?' Not to get too far into existential dread, but what even is the definition of normal now? At this point, the way we live now has gone on for so long, it qualifies as normal. The real question is, how much will our perception of "normal" shift as more and more people are vaccinated? I'm not sure it will ever get back to what I perceived to be normal before COVID-19.

But I'll still dress up and take grad photos at the place I've called home for the last four years and in the office that I'll always think of as the start of my career in journalism. I'll still flip my tassel as I watch my name get called on a live YouTube stream. I'll still celebrate this milestone in my life as best as I can.

My tassel and diploma sleeve will always symbolize so much more than a degree. They will serve as reminders of this year, along with all of its unique struggles and accomplishments.

A degree is still a degree, even if it's being presented from another city on YouTube.

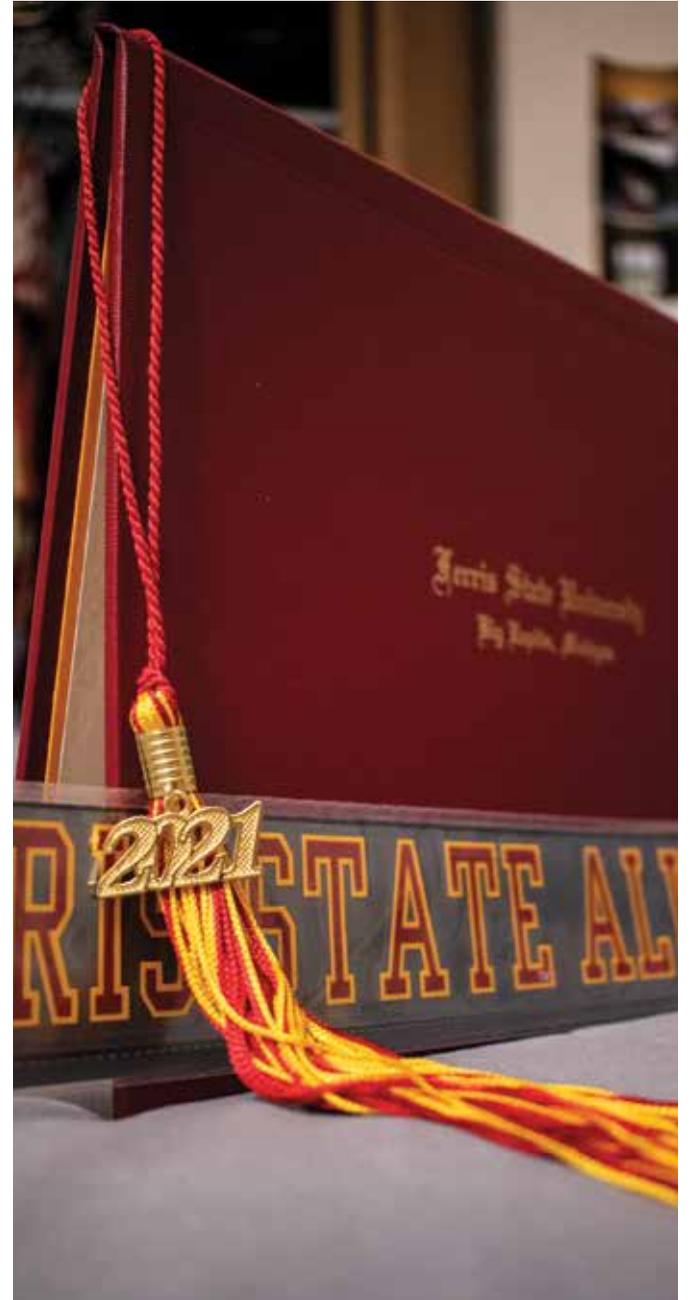


Photo by: Cora Hall | Editor in Chief

My tassel and diploma sleeve will always symbolize so much more than a degree.

GOT AN OPINION?

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

1. Think of a topic that you feel strongly about.

2. Write out your thoughts in a coherent and respectful manner.

3. include a headshot and some information about yourself (location, age, etc.).

4. Email your opinion to the editor for a chance to have your work published in our next issue!

Deadline for submissions every Friday by 5 p.m.
Cora Hall | Editor-in-Chief | Email: hallc36@ferris.edu

A match made in heaven...Well actually on Tinder

Don't be quick to call it on dating apps, you never know what'll happen



Veronica Mascorro
Social Media Manager

If anyone else would have sent me the message my partner sent me, I don't think I would've responded.

Most people on Tinder are looking for one thing and that's to hookup, and although there's nothing wrong with that, you can't help but roll your eyes when you get the same old message about wanting to hookup. After being on the app for over a year, I wasn't expecting to meet anyone through the platform.

To this day I'm not entirely sure what it was that drew me to my current boyfriend's message, but I'm glad that I did respond. Originally being from Michigan, he was home for winter break and was set to return to California for school, the day after we met. So it's safe to say that neither of us expected our mini date to really go anywhere. Boy, were we wrong.

The days following we spent all free time our time texting one another nonstop, both having wished we would've met a few days earlier so that we could've spent more time in person. Before we knew it he was buying a flight back to Michigan after our first FaceTime call.

He stayed with me for the weekend and from the moment I picked him up from the airport it had all felt so natural. It didn't feel like he was some stranger who was visiting me but instead it felt like we were living together. Our relationship progressed really quickly and we knew it would be difficult because of the distance but we knew what we wanted. So after 14 days of knowing each other, we officially started dating.

It's weird to look back at how we first met now, but finding relationships through Tinder or other dating apps is something that is occurring more and more, especially with COVID-19. The old "conventional" ways of meeting a partner has changed, with different restrictions, regulations and lockdowns, we've been stuck inside with not

much else to do and not many options in how to meet potential partners.

Fortune.com has reported that activity on dating apps has surged during the pandemic with Tinder recording its highest number of swipes on a single day: 3 billion, OkCupid saw a 700% increase in dates during March - May of 2020 and video calls on Bumble increased by 70%.

Similar to those going on first dates virtually, we've been able to stay connected, despite being 2,237 miles away from one another. Thanks to the use of FaceTime and other virtual platforms that have arisen due to COVID-19, we're "together" all the time and go through our daily motions as if we were with one another.

It seems that the stigma behind online dating is changing everyday, according to a study by the Pew Research Center, 54% of those surveyed said that relationships that begin on a dating site or app are just as successful as those that begin in person.

I don't think that you should go on Tinder or other apps with the mindset that you're going to find the love of your life. If you do,

you might set yourself up for failure or even miss it when it could be right in front of you. It's important to go into it with an open mindset because sometimes the people you least expect might be the right one for you. Also you're most likely not going to meet the one for you right away. Without a doubt you're going to encounter people who only want to hookups or people who want to play games.

Another big portion of it is the person behind the match. You can go on a few successful Tinder dates but if after some time you don't feel like you connect with the person or can't see a future with them they might not be the one for you. Because in my experience, it is true what they say about relationships; when you know, you know.

Don't be so quick to dismiss Tinder or any of the other dating apps you never know what might happen, I certainly didn't. But overall, be patient when looking for your future partner. They're not just going to be another chapter in your life that flies by, they're going to be the whole book that you spend the rest of your life reading.

Appreciate the Madness

March Madness should not be taken for granted



Brody Keiser
Sports Reporter

Last year, the meaning of March Madness changed for me.

For the first 18 years of my life, March Madness meant one thing – the best time of the year for college basketball. In 2020, wonderful madness of college basketball changed to the life-changing madness of the real world as the annual college basketball tournament was canceled for the first time in history due to COVID-19.

I'll be the first to admit that I took March Madness for granted, so I was devastated when the tournament was canceled last year. This year, I will not make the same mistake.

The craziness that defines March Madness will not be the same this year because fans will not be present at the games. However, this is no reason for us fans of the sport to be upset. We need to cherish the opportunity to watch college basketball.

At first, I was extremely upset that the NCAA canceled the tournament last year. I thought the NCAA should find a way to play the tournament, regardless of COVID-19. That was the selfish side of me talking, and I quickly realized that the safety of everyone involved was more important than my desire to watch college basketball.

Even now, a year later, athletes risk their health to play sports. This NCAA season has been like no other as countless teams experienced game postponements due to COVID-19. At the end of the day, the only thing that matters is the health of players, coaches, trainers, broadcasters, facility staff and anyone else involved in making this college basketball season run.

These people put their personal health at risk nearly every day so that fans of the game like me can watch and have enjoyment.

It's time we appreciate that.

Rather than complain about the lack of fans at March Madness games or mask or bench policies at games, fans need to simply appreciate that there will even be a March Madness this year.

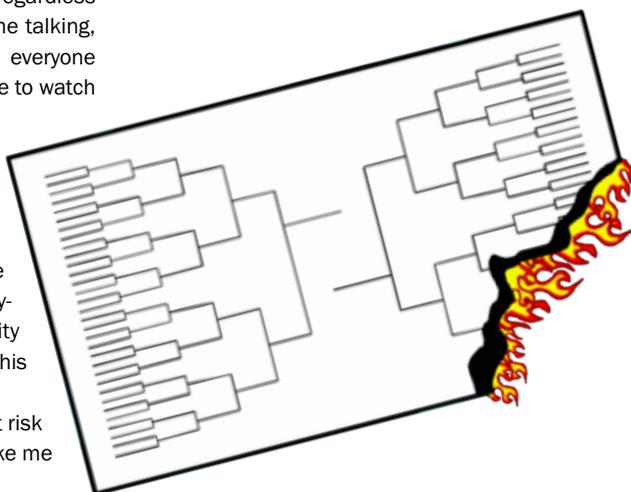
The world has come a long way from a year ago, but that does not mean we are clear of the danger of COVID-19. It might have taken me some time to realize this, but now I certainly know it is true.

March Madness is the peak of the college basketball season, and for many people including me, it is the peak of the year in terms of sports. Filling out a bracket, binge-watching games, experiencing heartbreaking or thrilling buzzer beaters and watching incredible upsets make March college basketball such an amazing time for fans.

This year, we will get to have all these things again after the devastation of not having them last year.

Not having sports for months during COVID-19 really made me realize that I took for granted being able to turn the television on and watch whatever sporting event I wanted to. However, COVID-19 also taught me a very valuable lesson about life in general, not just about sports.

We need to appreciate everything we have because nothing is guaranteed.



Graphic by: Charlie Zitta | Production Manager

FERRIS STATE TORCH



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SPORTS

Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor | sandeb16@ferris.edu

Historically poor season comes to close

Ferris hockey tacks on two more losses to finish with all-time program-worst record

Brody Keiser
Sports Reporter

Ferris hockey finished their season with a record of 1 - 23 - 1, their worst record in program history and worst record in all of college hockey for the 2020 - 2021 season.

The Bulldogs entered the WCHA playoffs 1 - 21 - 1 and lost their final two games against the Minnesota State Mavericks in the WCHA playoffs to close their season. They had a difficult test facing the nationally third ranked Mavericks and were unable to pull off an underdog victory.

Despite the historically poor season, head coach Bob Daniels was proud of the way his team fought in the playoffs.

"I was really happy with how the guys mentally and emotionally and physically were in tune and into the series," Daniels said. "I thought they played really hard and I was happy with everything but the loss."

The first playoff matchup was on Friday, March 12. Both defenses started strong as neither team scored in the first period, and the Mavericks recorded just seven shots on goal compared to four for Ferris. Ferris also killed a penalty in the period.

The second period was also a defensive effort and the game remained scoreless heading into the third period. At the end of the second period, the Mavericks had 17 shots on goal and the Bulldogs had 15. Daniels credited his team's strong defensive play to spending more time in the Maverick's end of the ice and limiting their offensive opportunities.

The Mavericks scored the first goal of the night with 11 minutes to go in the third period on a power play. Bulldog sophomore defenseman Max Finner was penalized for holding, allowing the Mavericks to take a 1-0 lead on the power play.

A minute later, Minnesota State scored again to take a 2 - 0 lead. They would hold that lead until 4:30 remained in the game when they scored again. Daniels challenged the goal for potential goaltender interference on the Mavericks, but the goal stood, and Minnesota State took the first game in a best-of-three series with a score of 3 - 0.

For Maverick goalie Dryden McKay, it was his ninth shutout of the season, and his second against the Bulldogs. It was also his 23rd collegiate shutout, three shy of former Michigan State goaltender Ryan Miller's all-time Division I college hockey record of 26.

Ferris got 24 saves from freshman goaltender Logan Stein in the game.

After the game, Daniels spoke on what his team needed to do to get a win in game two and take the Mavericks to a third game.

"We got it down to two things we feel we can clean up going into tomorrow: one was



Photo by: Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor

Lucas Finner would score an assist on Ferris States only goal in Game 2. Ferris would lose 3-1.

I felt we got a little sloppy in our breakouts. That can get solved very quickly. The second thing is our response to when the other team scores. Sometimes we get caught up in our own zone and maybe feel a little sorry for ourselves. Our response has to be stronger when they score," Daniels said.

"I liked our play through two-and-a-half periods, we were as good we were all year. We're close, and we don't have a lot to clean up, so I feel pretty confident going into tomorrow."

In Game 2 on Saturday, March 13, the Mavericks scored the first goal of the night at 9:03 in the second period. Unlike the night before, Ferris allowed the Mavericks to score just once in the period. The Bulldogs matched the Maverick's shot count in the second period with 10 apiece, but Minnesota State was able to capitalize with a goal and take a 1 - 0 lead into the third period.

The Mavericks scored again early in the third period to take a 2 - 0 lead. Ferris answered back with their first goal of the series on a power play with seven minutes remaining. Senior forward Marshall Moise scored and was assisted by senior forward

Coale Norris and freshman forward Stepan Pokorny.

Daniels said his team did "terrific" responding to the Mavericks' goals on Saturday.

"We really responded well," Daniels said. "Last night when they scored, they scored again a minute later. That didn't happen tonight. The response was really good. I'm really happy and appreciative of the guys' effort. We pretty much played this team even, and they're a darn good team."

With just under one minute to play in the third period and trailing 2-1, the Bulldogs pulled their goalie and the Mavericks scored on the empty net to take a 3-1 lead, a lead they would hold for the rest of the game.

Junior goaltender Roni Salmenkangas got the start in goal for the Bulldogs in Game 2 and recorded 28 saves in the game.

For the season, Ferris averaged 2.2 goals per game, up from 2.0 a season ago. However, they took 24 shots per game, down from 26.7 last year. Defensively, they allowed nearly four goals per game this year, up from 3.47 a season ago. Last season, the Bulldogs killed the power play 82% of the time

compared to just 73% this season. They improved on their own power play success, scoring on 19.4% of their power play opportunities this season compared to 14.5% last year.

This season left a lot to be desired for Daniels and his team, but that never shook Daniels' optimism and confidence in his team. He is excited to have a structured off-season and looks forward to working with his young players.

"I'm looking forward to the summer of conditioning," Daniels said. "We're going to get right after it and start our spring and summer conditioning program. We haven't had the chance with our freshman because of COVID to get them into Division I condition. I think they gained a lot of experience this year, but now it's time to get them into Division I shape."

Despite the record this season, Daniels feels the future is bright for his young team. When the Bulldogs take the ice next season, they will try to record Ferris's first winning season since 2015 - 2016.

WEEKEND SCORECARD

Volleyball

March 12 - Ferris 2
Michigan Tech 3
March 13 - Ferris 1
Michigan Tech 3

Men's Tennis

March 13 - Ferris 6
Lewis 1

Women's Tennis

March 13 - Ferris 6
Lewis 1

A rider's dream

Former equestrian looks back at career and the future ahead



Photo courtesy of Rachael Milkey

Rachael Milkey poses before competing in a tournament.

Austin Arquette Sports Reporter

For Rachael Milkey, horsing around was a literal term for much of her collegiate career.

Now a business administration graduate, Milkey is the former vice president of the equestrian team and enjoyed every second of it.

Milkey got into horses by reading books about them and she slowly became obsessed. She then decided to take lessons when she was nine. From there, Milkey started attending camps and showing at 4-H fairs and fun shows. In high school, she moved to eventing with the Dexter equestrian team.

"When I was young, my absolute favorite memories were of the annual 4-H fair where we got to spend a whole week nonstop with our horses and friends, riding constantly, having sleepovers in the barns and cheering each other on in the arena as we got to show a different discipline every day," Milkey said. "There was such a feeling of camaraderie among everyone there. We made lasting friendships and memories that are still dear to me today."

Collegiate Competition

Looking back, Milkey said her favorite thing about her time on the equestrian team at Ferris was being around "fellow crazy horse girls." When she was a part of the team, they were focused on team building and being a cohesive group. Aside from keeping their team compliant with Ferris club sports and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, the team leadership shared the common goal of becoming a true team.

"There was a lot to learn as far as the nuances of club sports and it was quite a time commitment, but it felt good to contribute my

time so the team could be in a good spot," Milkey said. "We chose to do the extra work to bring us together as a supportive team and it was really fulfilling to be a part of spearheading that effort. I learned a lot and am hopeful that what we did set the team up for future success."

Not only does the team get to practice, trail ride and show together, but they also try to plan fun outside activities, such as yoga, canvas painting nights and holiday gatherings. As vice president, Milkey was in charge of organizing community service events and volunteer opportunities. She was also a captain for their Relay for Life team.

"Seeing all of the planning and hard work paying off was so rewarding and understanding the work that went into organizing shows made me appreciate each horse event even more," Milkey said. "I remember those being stressful weekends, but full of laughter, learning and fun times."

The equestrian team is a lot different from other sports because of having to connect and relate to team members in such a short moment. Milkey said that you are given a horse five minutes before your event starts. Winning her first class was a memory Milkey will hold onto forever. When she made regionals Milkey said it was the highlight of her time on the team. Milkey said she drew a one-eyed ex-barrel horse to ride on her regional pattern and while it wasn't her best ride, she'll never forget the energy at that event.

When Milkey graduated in the spring of 2019, she left Ferris with many long-lasting friendships. With being a senior and having vice president duties of the equestrian club, Milkey's hard work has been noticed.

Ferris human resource management graduate Summer Gravelyn

said, "Rachel was a phenomenal vice president and a great leader who did a great job."

Gravelyn was also a highly active member of the equestrian club and attended every practice while juggling work like many college students. Gravelyn said that Milkey had a big impact on the team.

"Rachel's biggest strength is her can-do attitude, as she always showed up with a smile on her face and a positive attitude," Gravelyn said. "She was always willing to give a helping hand."

With all of Milkey's dedication to the team and the sport, the equestrian team will not be the same without her. Milkey's contributions to the team and to her individual teammates will stick with them forever.

"The team will truly miss Rachel very much and all the knowledge she has," Gravelyn said. "She had been with the team longer than anyone and they will all miss her dearly."

Dream Chasing

When she graduated and left behind her duties on the equestrian team, Milkey planned on training and riding horses back home in Dexter, Michigan, while she worked towards her dream of opening a therapeutic riding facility. Milkey said that even a few years after graduation this is still her goal.

"I'm a bit more realistic now and see that as a long-term goal. I'd like to start smaller with a lessons program, as that would fit better in my life right now, but involvement in therapeutic riding in some capacity will always be a dream of mine," Milkey said. "Whether it is owning my own, being a part of one of the amazing facilities that already exist, or even volunteering my time there, I do still see that being a part of my life later on."

While Milkey hasn't competed since she graduated, she does still ride. Milkey continues to train a couple of horses she worked with during college and hopes to start a small lesson program in the next year or two. Milkey encourages anyone that wants to try and chase their dreams, no matter how crazy, to do just that.

"Horses are a big part of her life and always will be," Ferris welding engineering senior and Milkey's boyfriend Charlie Beers

said. "Horses have shaped who she is and will always be a part of who she is."

Milkey is now sharing what she's learned with others and to watch them progress is incredible to her. Helping others gain confidence around horses makes Milkey grateful for what she brings to any equestrian club. Milkey said that with every job there is a learning curve but hard work and it pays off with huge dividends.

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Updated August 13, 2020

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

The return of March Madness

The sports squad picks their Final Four and National Champion

After a long two years, March Madness is finally back.

For us college basketball fans, March is the best time of the year. The Madness that comes with college basketball in the month of March allows us to witness some of the best basketball games ever played and, of course, fill out brackets. In the days leading up to the 2021 Tournament tip-off, millions of brackets will be filled out.

The sports staff here at the Torch consisting of Austin Arquette, Brandon Wirth, Brendan Sanders and Brody Keiser are here to give you our Final Four and Championship picks.

Brody:

This year is extremely interesting, because while it appears that the bracket is very top-heavy. I would have put both Iowa and Gonzaga in the Final Four, but because they lie in the same region, I had a really tough time choosing my Final Four member from the West region.

WEST: Iowa

After long consideration, I chose Iowa to win the West region.

I might seem crazy to have the Zags losing, Gonzaga won the regular season matchup 99-88, but I think Luka Garza will have way too good of a tournament to lose to Gonzaga again.

EAST: Texas

The East region was tough as well. Without Isaiah Livers, I personally do not see Michigan making it past the Sweet Sixteen. I have Texas coming out of the East and making the Final Four. Shaka Smart has the Longhorns playing some really good basketball this year, and if they can get past Alabama, I think Texas is the favorite in the East.

SOUTH: Baylor

The South victor was perhaps my easiest choice. Now, I actually think Baylor could get upset by Wisconsin's veteran team in the Round of 32. However, Baylor is my choice to win this region simply because I expect them to get back to their dominance pre-COVID shutdown.

MIDWEST: Illinois

There might not be a team playing better basketball right now than Illinois. Other than a slight hiccup a few weeks ago against my Michigan State Spartans, Illinois has been dominant to close this season. The combination of Ayo Dosunmu and Kofi Cockburn will carry this team to the Final Four. They are deep, and talented.

CHAMPION: Iowa

In the Championship game, I have Iowa beating Baylor. Luka Garza will dominate this tournament and leave Iowa with his jersey hanging from Carver-Hawkeye arena next to a National Championship banner.



Austin:

March Madness has its name for a reason and especially coming off a year of ups and downs it just seems fitting that NCAA basketball adds to the mix. This year is just one I wouldn't have expected as to myself there is no one big name standing out.

WEST: Gonzaga

My winner from the West region has to be the Zags. Simply put the team is undefeated. The Zags have shoot 54% from the field, 44% from 3-point range, and 90% from the free throw stripe. They have all around starts and it's only fitting their dominance continues through March.

EAST: Michigan

Michigan has an easier path but with Liver's injury Michigan's chances got a lot tougher. I have Michigan still rolling strong and coming out of the East in a final four matchup against Gonzaga.

SOUTH: Baylor

Baylor is ranked no. 2 in the BPI rankings. Versus top 25 teams, they stand at 7 - 2 on the season. They also have an extremely high powered offense, scoring 84.4 points per game.

MIDWEST: Illinois

Sophomore center Kofi Cockburn is arguably the best center in the nation, with an average of 17.6 points per game and 9.6 rebounds per game. His power inside works in perfect tandem with the outside shooting of Ayo Dosunmu will put Illinois in contention of a title.

CHAMPION: Gonzaga

I see Gonzaga able to handle Michigan and move into the Championship game against Illinois. My run in the championship game will have to go with the Zags as they will be ready to end their Cinderella story in perfect fashion. They have all the tangible weapons to stop Illinois and stay on top. It won't be an easy victory by any means, but I have the Zags holding the trophy in the end of all the madness.



Brendan:

It's been nearly two years since we last crowned a national champion in men's basketball. Now, we finally have a full bracket in front of us. Who is Oral Roberts? What is a Drexel? How did my dad's alma mater, Cleveland State, make into in the tourney?

WEST: Gonzaga

Gonzaga is the best team in the West region, being the only undefeated team in basketball, they are trying to become the eighth team to go undefeated and win an NCAA national championship. They would be the first team to do so since the 1976 Indiana Hoosiers. I see undefeated and I feel compelled to pick them to win that region.

EAST: Michigan

Michigan has been at times the best team in college basketball this year. Boasting a 20-4 record in the best conference in college basketball, they have the tools to go the distance this year, with a strong big man in freshman Hunter Dickinson, they will be a defensive threat.

SOUTH: Ohio State

Ohio State is arguably the most intriguing team in the tournament. They have been at times the second best team in the nation this year, but they are extremely streaky. They beat Purdue and their two big men, Michigan in the semi-finals of the Big Ten Tournament, and nearly beat Illinois. That's two no. 1 seeds and a 4 seed in three straight days. They have the best small ball lineup in this tournament.

MIDWEST: Oklahoma State

The Midwest will see Oklahoma State come out on top. They have the best player in college basketball this year. Cade Cunningham is a top three pick in this upcoming NBA draft, and he directed Oklahoma State to a Big 12 championship over Baylor.

CHAMPION: Ohio State

Call me biased, but Ohio States offense is explosive enough to win this championship, it's just a matter of if they are consistent enough. If they are, they can beat anyone in this tournament. Ohio State wins it all and I go home with a large grin on my face.



Brandon:

The fact we've made it to March is a blessing in of itself. The month isn't the same without unproductive work weeks, completely shredded brackets, and single-month streaming subscriptions.

WEST: Gonzaga

The undefeated Zags should be considered the favorite to win the West Region. With offensive firepower behind Jalen Suggs, Drew Timme, and Corey Kispert, this team can break scoreboards in March. Do not forget they beat four top 16 teams before the new year, including an 11-point win against their biggest threat in the region, #2 seeded Iowa.

EAST: Alabama

With #1 seed Michigan taking a hit with Isaiah Livers' injury, Alabama has an open door to slide into the Final Four. While the Crimson Tide do rely on the long ball, averaging near 30 attempts per contest, their efficient, gritty top-20 defense can stall sizable offensive threats like third seeded Texas and four seeded Florida State.

SOUTH: Baylor

The Bears have been dominant in a loaded Big-12 conference. Baylor has only lost two matchups this season in 24 games: a dogfight to #12 Oklahoma State in the Big-12 semifinal, and #11 Kansas. The Bears have pounded their competition by an average of 21 points per game. With the nation's best three-point shooting at 41.8%, it will be tough to prevent Baylor from playing in April.

MIDWEST: Illinois

There is not team hotter right now than the Fighting Illini. Illinois has ran through their remaining conference schedule thanks to the return of junior Ayo Dosunmu. Although the threats of Oklahoma State, West Virginia, and Houston loom, the Fighting Illini have the deepest bench to stay fresh during the tournament grind.

CHAMPION: Baylor

While there is potential for Baylor to run out of steam from 3-point range, the Bears' defense can bring them home. The Bears can turn opponent turnovers in points. The upperclassman's experience, coaching under Scott Drew, and overall versatility give them the ability to cut down the nets in 2021.



2021 MAY COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, May 1, 2021

Virtual Commencement

College	Contact	Phone #	Location
Health Professions	Richelle Williams	(231) 591-2263	VFS 210
Arts, Sciences & Education	Gayle Driggers	(231) 591-3666	ASC 3052
Business (Undergrad Students)	Carri Griffis	(231) 591-2493	BUS 200
Business (Graduate Students)	Shannon Yost	(231) 591-2168	BUS 200E
Engineering Technology	Joyce Mudel	(231) 591-3983	JHN 200
General Studies Graduates	Shelly VandePanne	(231) 591-2360	ASC 1017
Optometry	Michelle Balliet	(231) 591-3700	MCO 231
Pharmacy	Karen Ottobre	(231) 591-2252	PHR 201
DCCL	Megan Biller	(231) 591-2710	ALU 113

Note: You must satisfy all of your degree requirements before you officially graduate and receive your diploma. Caps and Gowns, may be purchased at the Ferris State University Bookstore (located in the University Center, 805 Campus Drive, Big Rapids MI 49307) or online at <https://ferris.shoopkhalhi.com> and have it shipped to you (a shipping fee will be charged). The deadline to order for Undergraduate and Graduate degrees shipping through the website is April 16th.

Commencement Electronic Program - Graduates must complete their online graduation application by **Friday, February 19, 2021 for their names to appear in the Spring 2021 Commencement Program** or their name will not appear in the Commencement Program.

Virtual Commencement Slide - To personalize your slide please visit Virtual Commencement at <https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/current/Commencement/virtualcommencement.htm>. An Online Graduation Application must be completed in order for your name to appear in the virtual ceremony. Information for personalizing your slide must be submitted by the end of the day on **Wednesday, March 10th**.

Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 9:00am

Ceremony 1	Michigan College of Optometry College of Health Professions
Ceremony 2	College of Pharmacy Doctorate in Community College Leadership College of Arts, Sciences and Education University College
Ceremony 3	College of Business
Ceremony 4	College of Engineering Technology

Diploma Cover & Alumni Pin Pick up - For those Graduate who selected yes to walk you may pick up your diploma cover and Alumni Pin during the following times in the University Center on main campus in Room 123.
3/2 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 3/9 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
3/4 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 3/11 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

For special accommodations or for more information regarding the Commencement ceremony, please visit the Commencement website www.ferris.edu/commencement or call (231) 591-3803.



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