

Pink selected as Eisler's successor

Ferris announces university's first POC presidential search finalist

Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

Ferris history was made on Monday, March 28 when Dr. Bill Pink was publicly named the presidential search finalist. For the first time since the university's founding, a person of color has been selected for the position.

Pink is completing his fifth year as president of Grand Rapids Community College. He worked as their vice president and dean of workforce development for two years prior. GRCC released a statement calling Pink's decision "bittersweet."

As the sole finalist, Pink is confident that he will be officially named Ferris' president-elect following the Board of Trustees' vote in May. Looking into the future, Pink believes institutions need to stand strong during what he calls an educational crossroads.

"We have those who are actually questioning and doubting the value of a higher education... Friends, that tells us that higher education is in a very pivotal place," Pink said.

Because Ferris offers a variety of educational paths from technical certificates to doctoral degrees, Pink trusts the university's "vision" during this crossroads. He hopes to use his position as president to foster supportive environments for all students, regardless of the path they take.

"If there's anything I'm going to want to accomplish, it is to make sure we provide more opportunities for our students to do what they want in the smoothest way possible," Pink said. "That means you have to support everybody. You have to help all these folks in doing their work so that they can do their work for you. My job is to make their jobs easy."

Pink plans on having a president's advisory council made up of students. He looks forward to forming a relationship with students on campus and wants to offer this council as an opportunity for them to interact with the president's office directly.

While addressing the audience of faculty, staff, the Board of Trustees and the Search Advisory Committee, Pink expressed how honored he was to be chosen as the finalist.

"You will find that I'm a person that believes in just kind of soaking in moments. Because sometimes, the moments that we are able to truly enjoy, the moments we are able to truly drink don't come so often," Pink said.

Pink's speech prompted waves of applause and laughter from the audience. His friendly attitude and presence extended directly to the SAC.

"I do not envy your process in terms

of having to select another president, but I applaud your choice," Pink said.

Chair Amna Seibold spoke on behalf of the BOT. Seibold addressed the tensions that formed between faculty and administration due to the confidential nature of the presidential search.

"I want to apologize because I may not have communicated enough to ensure that this campus community understood our process, steps and our reasoning for taking those steps," Seibold said.

The SAC, according to Seibold, was able to form a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates because of the confidentiality. Over 70 people applied for the position. Out of the four candidates presented to the BOT, three were current college presidents, two were Black, one was Latino and one was female.

Penny Nichols-Whitehead, the lone Ferris Faculty Association member on the SAC, spoke at length about her reservations about the lack of transparency. She wondered if the entire search was "performative," and even second guessed her decision to join the committee.

"I'm a skeptic and also a pragmatic pessimist. I'm always working for the best and hoping for the best but preparing for and really expecting the worst," Nichols-Whitehead said.

Despite this, Nichols-Whitehead did not see one name on the committee's short list of candidates that she would not have "wholeheartedly supported." After Pink's selection, Nichols-Whitehead is now "cautiously optimistic."

"I look forward to seeing [Pink] help Ferris live up to its history and the ideals of our founder and make Ferris a true leader in providing education regardless of race, station or, I would add, aspiration," Nichols-Whitehead said.

Sitting president David Eisler sat front row when his successor was announced. Eisler thinks of his nearly 20 years as president as an honor to him and his family.

"I'm ecstatic that Dr. Pink is going to be the next president of Ferris State University," Eisler said. "I think he's an excellent choice. He's got a really great background. He understands two-year education, four year education workforce development and he has great contacts in West Michigan in Grand Rapids. And I think his transition to being president and Ferris will be very smooth and successful."

Eisler's retirement will begin after the BOT votes to officiate Pink's presidency in May. Eisler still plans to be a present figure in the Ferris community after his presidential tenure ends.



Photo by: Dylan Rider | Torch Reporter

Dr. Bill Pink is the current President of Grand Rapids Community College, seated since 2017.



Photo by: Dylan Rider | Torch Reporter

Current president David Eisler will remain until the Board of Trustees officially votes on Pink in May.

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NEWS

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The people behind the panel

Contextualizing the Ukraine crisis

Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

Two historians, a Russian professor living abroad and a U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Officer quarantining in Poland joined forces to offer context and reason to an eager Zoom audience following President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Putin's actions inspired Dr. Christian Peterson, a Ferris history professor with a PhD in foreign relations and Russian history, to "bridge the gap" between academics and real-world conflict. He teamed up with Dr. Tracy Busch, a Ferris history professor with a PhD in Russian and European history, to educate the Ferris community on the Feb. 24 invasion.

Busch felt "tortured" watching the events in Ukraine unfold. When planning last Tuesday's event, titled "The End of the World as We Know it?," she recruited two additional speakers. Benjamin Busch, U.S. Marine and "professional husband of Tracy Busch," joined from a hotel in Poland after training Ukrainian citizens to fight. Russian-born English professor Lilia Caserta spoke on behalf of those mourning their country's innocence.

The four panelists could hardly stop their words from flowing. Centuries' worth of history, decades' worth of expertise and immeasurable empathy poured out of each of them.

Why now, why ever?

Like many others, Caserta felt "disillusioned," "depressed" and desperate for reason following the invasion.

"On Feb. 24, I really could not grasp reality," Caserta said. "It took me a lot of conversations with my colleagues in Russia. I came to a deep disillusionment—almost to the verge of depression—to kind of associate myself and take full responsibility as a Russian citizen. My country, my home country, is now [an] aggressor."

The panelists used their historical, political, military and personal knowledge to explain how such aggression is formed. As Tracy explained, this pivotal war does not exist in a vacuum. America's own "cluelessness" regarding the Russian perception of NATO's actions contributed to the current situation.

"[America] thought everybody wanted to be free and just like us, and we didn't really recognize that there's a long history in Russia... that has created a certain Russian mindset," Tracy said. "I don't think that mindset in any way justifies what happened. I think that Putin cynically manipulated that mindset"

Part of this mindset is the denial of Ukrainian sovereignty. To dispel Putin's be-

lief that Ukraine is not its own independent nation, Tracy presented over a thousand years of territorial history.

"If you are Russia[n] today, and you're saying that Kiev doesn't exist, that Ukraine doesn't exist, that is basically the same thing as saying your own mother does not exist," Tracy said.

Tracy began to wonder about the delicate balance of peace and why it is ever interrupted.

"I think that's why this is resonating with us so much; there wasn't any Ukrainian aggression here," Tracy said. "This was Russia's decision, like they say, 'Putin's war.' I think that's a good way to think about it."

Putin has still been able to convince Russian citizens that his actions are appropriate.

"I can compare [an] average Russian to a mushroom. You grow in the dark and very much underground because you don't seek information outside of what is given from the television," Caserta said.

Even if his own citizens remain unaware, Putin's unprovoked attacks are heard around the world.

As an American

Despite the American government's impact on foreign relations, some American citizens are unfamiliar with what's beyond our borders. One of Tracy's students noted that Americans "just don't know where places are unless we're at war with them."

When Peterson was asked by a student why someone living in America should care about what happens in Ukraine, he explained that we live in an interconnected world.

"I can compare [an] average Russian to a mushroom. You grow in the dark and very much underground because you don't seek information outside of what is given from the television,"

--John Caserta

"What happens if the world [allows] countries who feel more emboldened to wage war against their neighbors?" Peterson said. "... It could create a different type of world that's not as congenial to the United States, as many Americans have grown accustomed to."

Peterson took it upon himself to analyze the international response. The invasion damages more than Ukraine, it undermines the "idea that democratic states are the most legitimate, or the most prosperous, and should really set the norms of how human beings should govern themselves."

Following the Trump administration, which Peterson believes could not have been any weaker in defending Ukraine, America is now enforcing the "most systematic economic blockade of a country in world history." The Biden administration has worked with the European Union to cut Russia off from nearly half of its foreign resources.

Benjamin felt a sense of responsibility when his friend and fellow Marine encouraged him to fly to Ukraine. From there, they helped prepare a civilian defense force. They had no shortage of men, as all males aged 18 to 60 were expected to stay and fight under martial law.

"All the men were expected to stay and fight. So, the border was just clogged with people carrying nothing but a suitcase. I'm talking [about] entire lives consolidated to a single suitcase or two and children," Benjamin said.

As a Marine infantry officer, Benjamin trained around 60 volunteers in a small unit of a former Soviet factory. He called this work "training irregular sources to fight conventional forces."

Most of the volunteers were using store-bought weapons.

"My thinking was [that] a city is a tremendous weapon against somebody trying to invade. Every house becomes a fortress you can sacrifice, it just becomes ground," Benjamin said.

Benjamin was impressed by the Ukrainians' commitment. These volunteers left their jobs as IT workers, construction workers, machinists or lawyers for two weeks to become guerilla fighters.

"My notes to them after every single training period were to go home and imagine fighting your way out of your house,... make sure you have a way to get away," Benjamin said. "Make sure you understand everything about your community and how to organize it as a fortress. I don't think we think about that very often because it's been a long time since the U.S. has felt the presence of invasion."

Benjamin contracted COVID-19 while working in Ukraine. Fortunately, a Ferris Fulbright Scholar from Poland was able to send a computer to his Krakow quarantine hotel, ensuring his attendance on Zoom.

Not everyone has the resources or knowledge to train civilians for combat. However, each of these speakers truly believed that smaller actions, some as simple as speak-

ing the truth out loud, have undeniable impact.

Small actions in a big world

"My years in the United States really taught me not to be afraid to speak the truth," Caserta said. "What I now see, and it hurts me personally and professionally, is how many of the Russian people are forced to be silent because they're afraid to lose employment or particular social status."

Caserta wants young Americans to understand that many Russians oppose this war, even when it makes them a political minority. Some of Caserta's colleagues and family members call her opposition unpatriotic, and her mother questioned her own parenting.

"[My mother] accused me of not being a patriot and said, 'I feel really bad. I feel like I did not raise you well because you are speaking against your country.' I think it's a high level of patriotism when you can criticize your country and say we need to do better," Caserta said.

While living abroad, she feels the need to express that this war is not representative of all Russian people and culture.

Russian protestors are being arrested in droves for their defiance. Caserta depicted a scene of female protestors being physically and verbally abused by police officers. Their bones are broken, and their heads are shaved as they are called "Western sluts."

"There are fines, the Russian government can revoke my citizenship, but I [would] rather speak instead of being silenced. I want to look at the face of my children and my students and say, 'Yes, this is what I think based on the information I have and my experiences, and I'm not afraid to say it,'" Caserta said.

Tracy not only holds on to the belief that her words and actions matter, she depends on it.

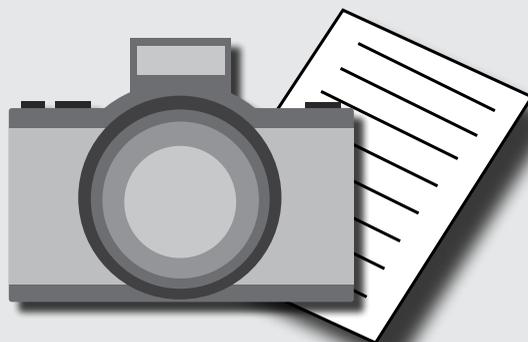
"[My motivation] is similar to my work in the Museum of Sexist Objects. The reason I took a pay cut to come in and teach in the classroom, the reason I live in West Central Michigan," Tracy Busch said. "I can't do it without the thought that the little things I do will ultimately, maybe, make a little bit of difference. It's pretty much my whole ethos of the way I live my life."

Though each panelist aches for the other side of the world, there was a collective exhale as Caserta wrapped the night up with bittersweet sentiments.

"Great questions [and] a great time. I'm very proud of myself that I did not [break] and cry. [This is] the first time I talked about this without crying. Thank you. I really feel like I accomplished a lot emotionally today," Caserta said.

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MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

LANSING - Michigan Legislators have reached an agreement with Gov. Whitmer to spend approximately \$4.7 billion on state infrastructure.

This spending bill would include a plan to replace lead water pipes, improve dam safety, shore up the state's unemployment and more according to the Detroit Free Press.

"These are tough times for families, small businesses and communities, and this bipartisan supplemental will help grow our economy, create jobs and invest in every region of our state," Whitmer said in a joint statement issued after 10 p.m. on Wednesday according to Freep.

"I look forward to signing this supplemental when it reaches my desk and continuing in this spirit of collaboration to pass another balanced, bipartisan budget that delivers on the kitchen-table issues."

Republicans legislators intro-

duced the plan in the House Appropriation Committee. The vote for the bill was delayed for north of 13 hours, but once it finally reached the committee floor, the meeting lasted 15 minutes and the bill was voted to be brought to the legislatures with a vote of 27-0 with two members abstaining from the vote.

The bill is expected to pass through both legislative chamber before lawmakers go on their two-week spring recess.

About \$3.1 billion of the funds will come from federal COVID-19 relief money according to the House Fiscal Agency.

A summary of the plan was obtained by Freep as the full bill text was not available yet. The plan would include:

- About \$1.7 billion to improve drinking water.
- Almost \$500 million in housing and rental assistance
- More than \$380 million for road and bridge improvements
- \$322 million in unspecified COVID-19 relief.

GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

LIMA, PERU - Peruvian President Pedro Castillo is currently facing the possibility of impeachment on the charges of graft, or bribery and corruption.

Castillo denies the allegations brought against him and suggests that economic groups seeking a "coup" against him and his government.

"We have been democratically elected and in that regard we are not going to disappoint. I hope that this page will be closed today," Castillo told state television on Monday.

Castillo, a former teacher from a family of farmers narrowly won his bid for the presidency last year.

Only taking office eight months ago, an impeachment would send the country into a fresh political crisis according to Reuters News.

Castillo will face lawmakers in the unicameral legislature Monday, March 28 with a vote likely to take place after midnight the following day.

The current metrics suggest the

vote may go in Castillo's favor as only 76 members of the legislature voted to start proceedings.

It would take 87 votes for Castillo to be dismissed.

Over the weekend protesters took to the streets of Lima, Peru's capital calling for Castillo's removal from office.

"People can't take it anymore. We are fed up, the people demand justice and all the corrupt people to be gone," said one protester, Claudia Iriarte to Reuters News.

The country has had five presidents since 2016, one resigned before an impeachment vote could take place and another was impeached in 2020. A bid to impeach Castillo was made in December, but was unsuccessful.



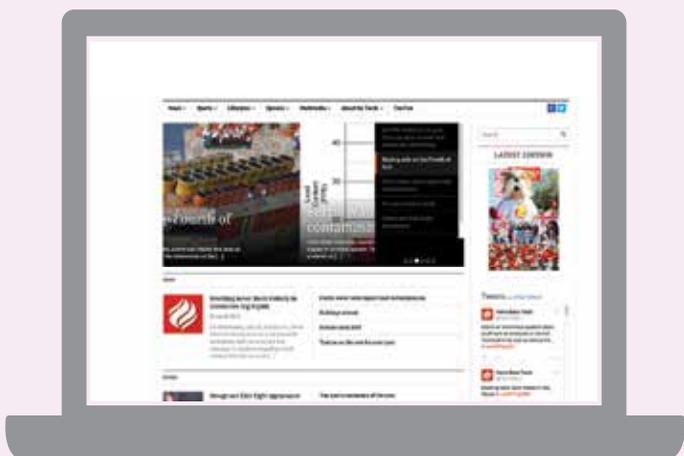
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13 & counting

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Within the 4.56 square miles that make up Big Rapids, 13 marijuana dispensaries sit, and more are on the way.

A new dispensary, High Society located on 804 Clark St., recently opened in February, making it the 13th dispensary in the area. In an already saturated cannabis community, High Society's goal is to bring a different perspective to the industry, according to their website.

"I think it's cool that a lot [of dispensaries] are able to stay successful and kind of work together," Carl Olson, the general manager of High Society, said. "Every [dispensary] has their own little cool or uniqueness to them."

To survive in a crowded cannabis community, Olson stated that they hope to build a strong relationship with the community. According to Olson, High Society has its prices set to be the lowest in the state of Michigan.

According to Bridge Michigan, a nonprofit news organization, Michigan cannabis prices are lower than 30 or 40 years ago, when they were illegal. In January, the average price for an ounce fell 70 percent to \$152 in January, from \$516 in December of 2019.

This benefit isn't just being seen by cannabis consumers either. The Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act put in place by the Michigan Legislature states that cities, townships and municipalities will get a portion of the 10% adult use tax back to their budgets. It was collected from 374 licensees during the 2021 fiscal year. More \$111 million was collected from the marijuana tax statewide.

Big Rapids alone will see \$677,441.28 from the 12 active licenses within the 2021 fiscal year within city limits or \$56.400 per license.

Dispensaries mainly set their prices depending on what price they get their products at. According to Olson, the lower the price means the dispensary got the product for a "better deal."

For dispensaries to survive in this area, they need to believe in their products and team, as stated by RAIR store manager Justin Forrest.

"Having other [dispensaries] in town does help people explore other options as well," Forrest said. "And they end up finding something that they like."

While High Society is the newest member of the family of dispensaries in the area, a new dispensary is opening in the former Mother Nurture building, according to the Big Rapids Pioneer.

Mother Nurture closed its doors in early February, originally intending to be a temporary closure, citing a tough cannabis market, which led them to their decision. They weren't the only ones to close, either. The Wellflower, which was located next

to Jet's Pizza in downtown Big Rapids, closed last October for similar reasons after only being open for about 10 months.

Fluresh, LLC has recently purchased the former Mother Nurture site and adjacent lot, pending approval of the lot rezoning from an R-1 residential lot to a C-3 commercial lot by the Big Rapids Planning Commission, which they received Tuesday, March 22.

"We did a similar rezoning a couple of years ago for the adjacent property," community development director Paul Priebe told the planners, according to the Pioneer. "It was formerly a dentist's office, and it was occupied for a little over a year by Mother Nurture, which was a marijuana provisioning center."

Fluresh wasn't the only marijuana business seeking the blessing of the Planning Commission, though. Michigan Pipe Dreams LLC, a marijuana growing and processing company, purchased the old Bulldog Cinema building in hopes of turning it into a new growing and processing facility. The company already owns the facility next door and is looking to expand and create a campus of sorts, according to Priebe.

"We were able to procure the building owner and offer an option to purchase. We also purchased the house on DeKraft, so we basically have the city block," CFO of Michigan Pipe Dreams Christian Frank said to News Advocate. "That will complete our campus. The Maple Street building is a smaller deal, so we have the funds to go ahead and finish out the processing [facility] and just do the genetic grow. We are looking forward to getting started."

The permit for special land use was granted by the Planning Commission, as Michigan Pipe Dreams had agreed to the four additional terms in the permit for marijuana businesses, which require them to meet the proper zoning regulations for parking, ensure there is a comprehensive wastewater treatment and chemical disposal plan, keep all marijuana processes indoors and properly stored and properly dispose products if need be.

The permit was also granted on the basis that they had reached an odor containment agreement with the Spectrum Service Center next door, according to News Advocate.

"Regarding the wastewater treatment, I met with the wastewater treatment supervisor and two staff members of the industrial pre-treatment program the city has," Priebe said to News Advocate. "Those staff had no concerns that they thought would cause issues."

Michigan Pipe Dreams is hoping to have the remodeled cinema operational as a growing and processing facility by the end of the summer.

Jerry Gaytan contributed to the reporting of this story.

Competition curtails consumer cannabis costs



Photo by: Angie Rosenthal | Torch Photographer

The contemporary cannabis company, High Society, sits across from Little Caesars on Clark Street.

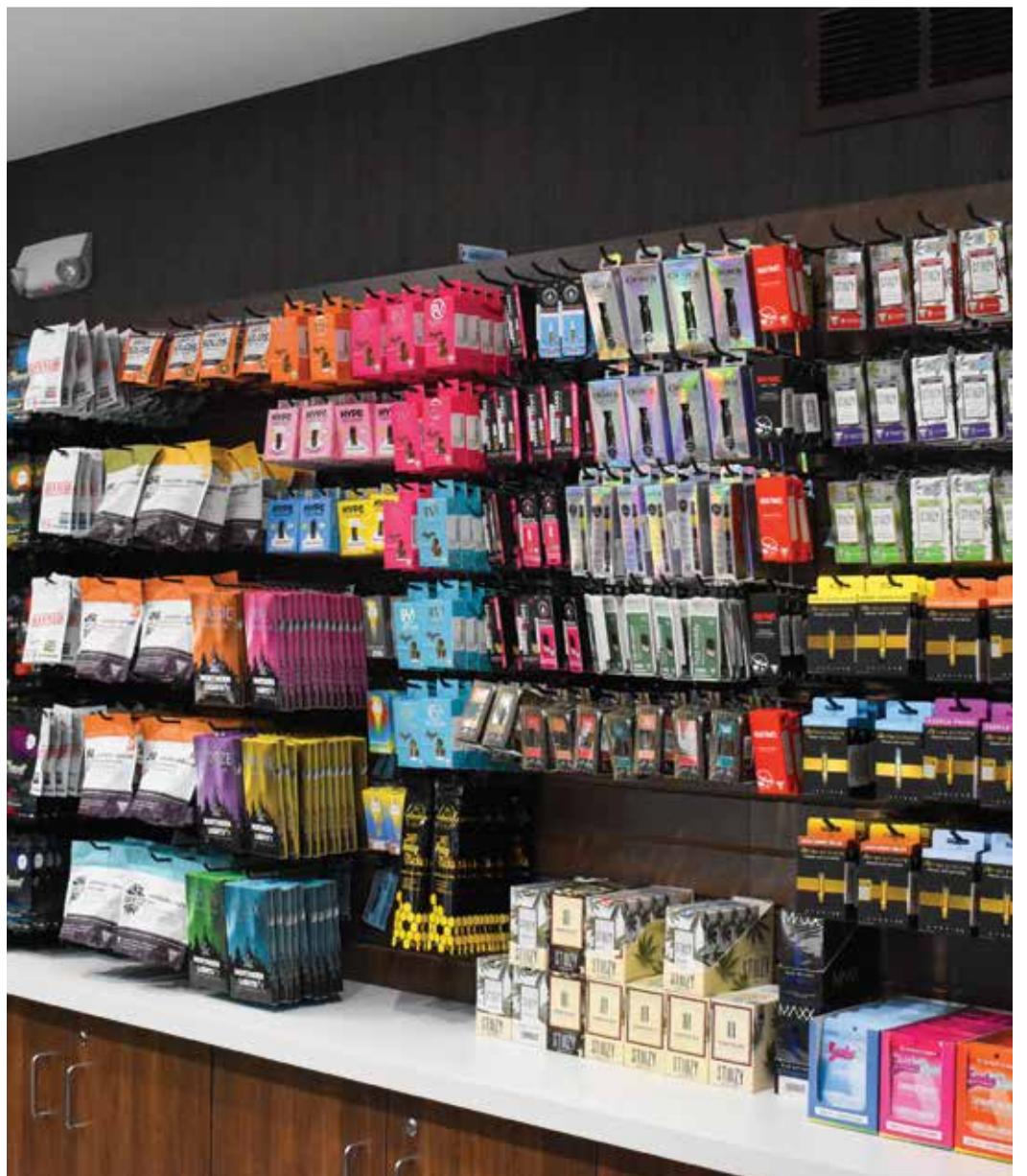


Photo by: Angie Rosenthal | Torch Photographer

High Society entices customers with the lowest cannabis prices in Michigan while providing a personal experience.

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: The right choice

By Brendan Sanders

When Dr. Pink was announced as the university's next president Monday morning, I felt excited. Despite all my worries about the presidential search, Ferris State appears to have made the right choice.

I will not lie; I was deeply concerned about the lack of transparency that was happening as the university searched for the replacement of outgoing President David Eisler. Heck, at the Torch we wrote a full article about the lack of transparency.

I deeply value honesty and transparency, hence the reason I always push to give people the most accurate information available to the people who read our newspaper.

Going into Monday, I was apprehensive since I had no clue who the next president would be. Additionally, hearing that the university was bypassing the idea of introducing multiple candidates to the public and only presenting a single candidate, I was concerned.

Yet, as Amna Seibold talked on the podium everything started to make sense. The NDA's made sense, though of course, I would have loved the information, it allowed them to widen their search and get a more diverse pool to pick from.

While it widened the search pool, it was still up to the committee to pick the correct person for the job. Which they did with the selection of Bill Pink.

Looking through his credentials, he seems like the perfect fit for what this university needs. He already has some solid experience as president at Grand Rapids Community College. He is also a board member of many West Michigan organizations.

He was named 2019 Newsmaker of the Year for education by the Grand Rapids Business Journal, and the 2019 Pacesetter, an award for community college presidents from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.

I spent hours on Monday researching Dr. Pink, and from what I have found it appears he has been an asset everywhere that he has been.

Looking at social media, the support that has been given to Dr. Pink after the announcement has been almost unanimously positive. In fact, most people have talked about how good of a job that he has done at GRCC.

Bravo Ferris State University, it looks like you made a good choice in who to lead this university going forward.

If I could give one piece of advice to Dr. Pink, it would be to keep lines open to the students. We are both the product and the customer. Being able to connect with the students and the faculty through communication is a major part of success in community relations.

If you can nail that, then you will be well-liked here at Ferris State University.

Apple's invention of universal controls

Apple just changed modern computing, and no one seemed to notice

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Last week, Apple released iOS/iPadOS 15.4 and MacOS 15.3, introducing features like FaceID with a mask, dozens of new emojis, a new non-binary Siri voice, and Universal Control.

While being able to unlock my iPhone with a mask on is nice, it's two years too late, and the newness wore off quickly. The new emojis are sweet, and I love the unique Siri voice, but Apple silently shook the computing world with Universal Control.

Universal Control allows users to utilize a single keyboard and mouse to control all their iPad and Mac devices. The insane part is there is literally no setup. You simply drag your mouse to the edge of the screen you're currently working on, and boom, you're now controlling another device.

This is earth-shattering for student productivity. As we have become keyboard queens due to the pandemic, any features that aid in making these devices more efficient for us is a massive benefit in my book.

Not only can you utilize your peripherals across devices, but have a file on your iPad you need on your Mac? Just drag and drop; not even AirDrop is required. Just grab and go.

There is a myriad of use cases for this feature, an artist running a business from RedBubble? Cool, drag your ProCreate drawings over to your desktop and make your art a purchasable sticker in 90 seconds. Need to access your course notes while working on a study guide? Don't even move your hands off your laptop.

I have practically reinvented my workflow as Universal Control shaves valuable time off my tasks. For instance, I position my iPad below my ultrawide desktop monitor and read my textbooks off it while working on assignments. Being able to scroll around in my textbook and use my favorite keyboard shortcut, Command + F

to search all without having to move my hands off the keyboard. It feels just like an extension of my current computer because of how seamless the experience is.

If I am on the go, I utilize the lighter version of Microsoft Word on my iPad while I do research within the more powerful, fully-featured browser with extensions that aren't available for Safari on iPadOS within Safari on macOS. I could go on and on about the countless use cases I have already cooked up in my week with it.

It doesn't just stop at a pair of devices, either. Users can position their devices in any array they wish, and your devices will intelligently decipher their position. While this works most of the time, as I like to position my devices in a vertical stack, I must manually go into System Preferences and set up my array the way I want. However, if you are just setting your devices next to each other as intended, a simple push to the edge will get you going with no issue.

This feature is compatible with MacBook Pro 2016 and later, MacBook Air 2018 and later, iMac 5K 2015 and later, iMac Pro, Mac Mini 2018 and later, and Mac Pro 2019 and later. In terms of iPad, all iPad Pro's are compatible, iPad Air 3rd generation and later, iPad Mini 5th generation and later, and iPad 6th generation.

If you have already invested in the "walled garden" of the Apple ecosystem, run to your devices' settings and get on board, you don't want to miss this.



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“Turning Red” is a perfect preteen movie

From puberty struggles to cultural expectations, this film explores it all

Rebecca Witkowski
News Reporter

“Turning Red” is Pixar’s latest straight-to-streaming film. The film was released to Disney+ on March 11. The movie follows 13-year-old Meilin Lee as she struggles to balance her mother’s expectations of her, her social life and her emotions. For these basic reasons and more, “Turning Red” is the perfect preteen movie.

This article will go into detail about some of the plot points of the movie and why it makes “Turning Red” the perfect preteen movie. For that reason, there are spoilers ahead.

“Turning Red” excellently captures the struggle many preteens and early teens go through. Meilin is obsessed with the boyband 4 Town, believes that she is basically an adult and is trying as hard as she can to please her mother, while also doing what she wants. She is an excellent portrayal of a preteen girl going through puberty.

One Facebook post that circulated soon after the release of the film argued that the movie encouraged rebellious behaviors and was inappropriate for kids. The post had criticisms such as “The word ‘crap’ was used” and “the girl stands up to her mom and says she likes boys, music, and gyrating.”

However, I don’t think that the movie was encouraging rebellious behaviors, rather, I believe the movie was empathizing with the many preteens who go through the rebellious phase. As kids transition from child to preteen to teenager, they tend to obsess over the idea of being a mature adult. Exploring boy bands and “gyrating” are part of this transition.

Other Disney and Pixar films have had rebellious main characters that are not criticized. Mulan, Riley from “Inside Out,” Nemo and many others all disobey their parents and do what they want.

The Facebook post also argues that some of the language used was inappropriate. For example, one

of Meilin’s friends’ mom is said to have called the music the girls listened to “stripper music.” While I can understand how it would be inappropriate for younger audiences, I think it’s acceptable for a preteen movie.

An argument was also made that the film was unrelatable, due to the fact that the movie focused on a Chinese family living in Toronto, Canada. Meilin and her mother are seen cleaning their temple, giving tours and praying to their ancestors.

Despite not relating to some of the cultural aspects of the movie, I still found it very relatable. I sympathized with Meilin’s struggle to fulfill her mother’s wishes and also do what she thought was right. Many people who had to balance their own wants with the wants of their parents can relate to Meilin’s struggle.

In one scene, Meilin’s mother discovers Meilin’s drawings of a boy she and her friends thought was cute. Meilin’s mother confronted the boy, thinking the drawings were things the boy did to Meilin. Meilin then got frustrated for allowing herself to get distracted and potentially disappoint her mother. For me, this was an extremely relatable scene. Growing up, I never wanted to do anything to affect my mother’s opinions of me. Seeing Meilin go through the same struggle made me feel seen.

There was another scene early in the movie in which Meilin first turns into a red panda. Her mother mistakes Meilin’s screams as Meilin discovering her first period and brings in a bunch of pads for Meilin to use. This is one of the first examples of pads being mentioned in a children’s movie that I have seen, and I think it’s done amazingly. It’s used as a plot point and made to seem embarrassing for Meilin to go through, but also helps to normalize menstrual products for young girls.

“Turning Red” is an amazing movie for preteens to watch. It explores boy band obsessions, the beginnings of puberty, the struggles of fitting in and the balancing of parents’ expectations.



Photo by: Sienna Parmelee | Production Assistant

Social sabotage

The tragedy of COVID-19 and the “college experience”

Jeremy Wolfe
Freelance Reporter

For many of the seniors at Ferris, the college experience has forever been changed by the onset of the pandemic. More than half the time we have spent here has been lived under the shadow of it, and we’ve lost entire semesters and years of socializing, meeting people and doing extracurricular activities as a result. While the physical toll and suffering caused by COVID-19 was undoubtedly a much greater problem and worthy of this sacrifice, it has still created a mental toll on the people who attended college within the last three years.

Speaking from my own experience, losing out on in-person meetings and not being able to see people as a result of having classes moved online and people leav-

ing the dorms has left a pretty big hole in my second year of school. In addition, with the online portion of the semester being handled relatively poorly due to a sudden need for virtual meetings and professor’s inexperience with using relevant technology, it was difficult to have an appropriate education at the time. Even worse, the loss of seeing people regularly helped create an element of isolation that a lot of people are still getting out of.

Even in following years, my classes were basically still all online, with only one being in person in my second semester. In addition to this, dorms prohibiting residents from inviting guests over really brought down the atmosphere of people coming and going that I appreciated in my freshman and first semester of sophomore year. While understandable, having people over

would only increase the risk of getting the virus, it contributed to the strain that was already present. Especially since there was no way of knowing when vaccines would be available or when we could “return to normal.” In fact, I would say a “return to normal” is impossible, and that there is only going to be a “new normal” after what the world has been through.

For me, this senior year was a big change, since a lot of restrictions were lifted with case numbers mostly dropping across the board. Although the scares in regards to the Delta and Omicron variants and increasing death numbers put a damper on what could have otherwise been a much needed positive change for campus.

It’s only now that things seem to have gone back to where they were before, but not without the baggage of isolation peo-

ple are still carrying. Knowing people who have died from the virus and the general struggle of keeping afloat in a world that has been ravaged physically, mentally and economically by the virus has ensured that there is no easy way forward.

I am hopeful that there will be improvements to people’s wellbeing and mental health with the virus slowly going away over time. However, I feel the experience I had in college really put a sad note on what others used to tell me would be the best years of my life. I hope that this is the end of it so those in the grades below me can have the proper college experience and won’t have the shadow of COVID-19 looming over them anymore.

GOT AN OPINION?

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Deadline for submissions every Friday by 5 p.m.

Rebecca VanderKooi | Opinions Editor | Email: vandr122@ferris.edu

1. Think of a topic that you feel strongly about.
2. Write out your thoughts in a coherent and respectful manner.
3. Email your opinion to the editor for a chance to have your work published in our next issue!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



ALYSSA MYERS

I love being a Black woman because of how different we all are. We come in all forms, and there is no right or wrong way for us to be who we are. I love that our sisterhood and Black Girl Magic makes us a tribe. We wear colors, patterns and hairstyles like crowns. I love being a Black woman because of our glowing, sun kissed skin. I love being a Black woman because of my hair; my natural curls are beautiful and unapologetically unique. I love that I carry a history of triumph. I use my voice to navigate the pain that my ancestors and current women of color go through in society. I love being a Black woman because of civil rights heroes such as Rosa Parks, Diane Nash, Josephine Baker and Daisy Bates. I love being a Black woman because of modern inspirations such as Angela Bassett, Madam C.J. Walker, Oprah Winfrey and Michelle Obama. I love being a Black woman because of musical artists such as Aretha Franklin, Beyonce, Alicia Keys, Diana Ross and Chaka Khan. I love being a Black woman because of shows and movies that represent me such as "Hidden Figures," "Living Single," "Little" and "Nappily Ever After." I love being a Black woman because of all the blood, sweat and tears our mothers, aunts, grandmothers and friends spilt while taking care of us. I love being a Black woman because of my beautiful, little sisters. I love being a Black woman because of my friendships and bonds with other beautiful, Black women. I love being a Black woman because of all the hard work and love my mother has given and guided me with. I love being a Black woman because it reminds me that I am powerful beyond measure and can transcend anything this world throws at me. I love being a Black woman because no matter the opinions on how Black women and girls should be, dress or act, Black women will always unapologetically be the Black queens we were born to be.

ANGIE ROSENTHAL

One thing I love about being a woman is the default support of other women. In my experience, there is a default expectation –you might even call it a "girl code"- for women to support one another. We all seem to understand that it is hard out there, especially for us ladies, and by helping each other we are helping ourselves. For example, the recent Pixar hit "Turning Red" is the first Pixar movie to be directed by a woman. To give that context, there have been twenty-five Pixar feature-length films, and somehow this is the first one with a woman director. That's one of the reasons I watched the movie, I wanted to support another woman. Her success will lead to more women-directed Pixar films and just woman directors in general. This type of support extends to smaller things, like going out of the way to shop at women-owned Etsy shops or leaving good reviews at women-owned businesses. I love that instinctive to support one another. Whenever I partake in this girl code or witness it happening, I feel like I'm part of something bigger than myself. In a way, it's a default support of the future.

REBECCA VANDERKOOI

Being a woman is certainly not for the faint of heart, between the gender pay gap, and the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, there are definite challenges I have experienced as a woman. However, I am still proud of my gender identity, a big reason for this is because women so often support and lift one another up in ways that inspire and encourage me. As society continues to grow and change, the idea of what defines a woman is changing as well. Women now have much more freedom to express themselves, to wear what makes them the most comfortable, to marry who they desire, to work whatever job they want, and to go against traditional gender roles if they so choose. Women weren't handed power the way men were, every right we now have we've had to fight for, that makes us resilient, outspoken and powerful. What makes women powerful is our unity, our strength

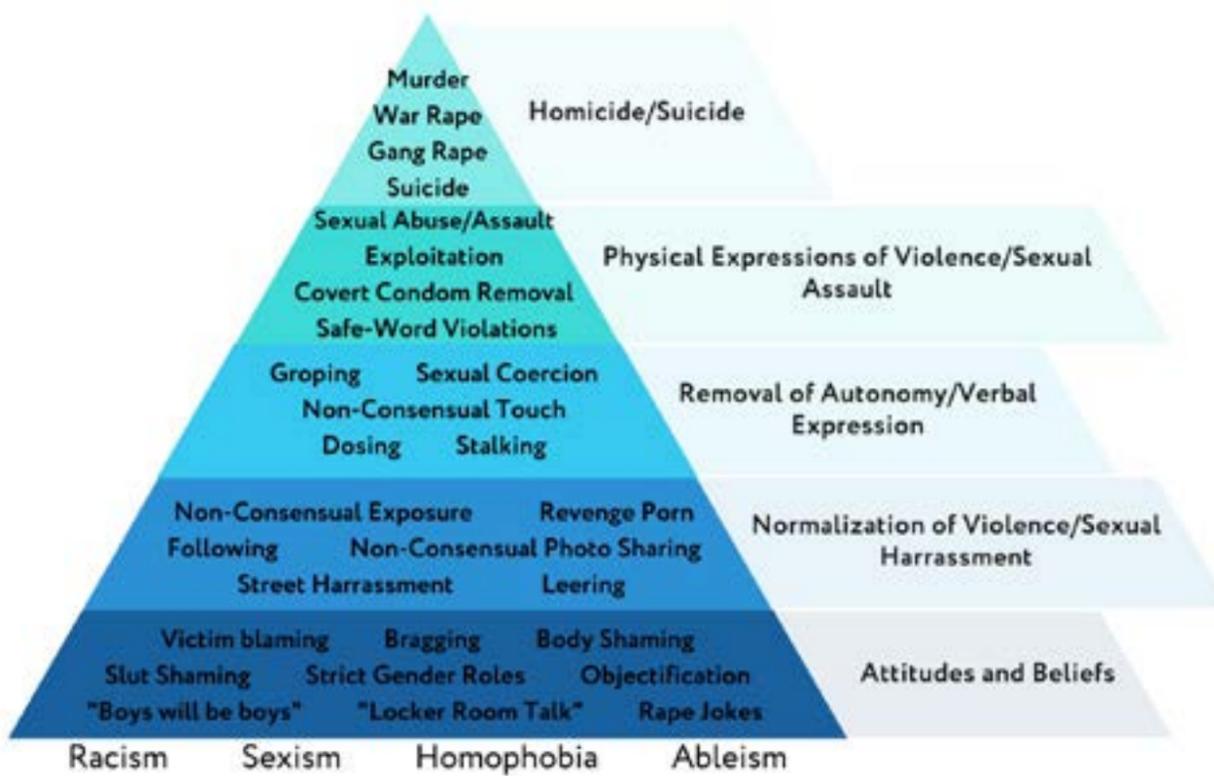
GIULIANA DENICOLO

What do I love about being a woman? I love the power that it holds. Being feminine, being a woman, anything in that realm is looked at so negatively or even pitied in the face of sexism or inequality. But I think that being a woman is powerful and should not have the stigma behind it that it does. Yes, sexism is very real and current, but it does not overtake the definition of what is truly means to be a woman. We are powerful because we take what we deserve. We fight for our rights, and we fight to be equal. Before this year, being a woman to me was just that. After I researched feminism and took a class that educated me on sexism and inequality, I now can say that it is so much more to me. Being a woman is not just my sex, it is a part of who I am and that makes me feel empowered. The thing is, as women, we're used to people trying to make us feel powerless and we don't let it happen, that what makes us powerful. We are undermined and the fact that we rise above and prove ourselves makes us powerful. Being a woman is powerful, regardless of what society makes it look like.

MARISSA RUSSELL

Pink, barbie dolls, skirts and other cutesy things. These are what femininity is 'supposed' to look like. Objects with bows and ribbons are shoved in our faces and little girls are told to wrap their personality into this feminine ideal. Because femininity seemed like this two-dimensional ideology, I thought I was never going to be able to enjoy being a girl. I was raised with boys, so I knew the different shades of mud better than pink and all the names of tools in a tool box. I learned after years of struggling that everyone was wrong about what a female should look like. I can make femininity look like whatever I want it to be, and it is not linear and can change constantly. Femininity doesn't look like this for me. Being raised by a single mother made me see femininity as hard work and dedication and not being put into a box people already assumed you belonged in. There is no specific way it must look because femininity looks like whatever you want it to be. There is no correct way for it to look. For me, I enjoy having black nails and high heeled boots with spikes and not being something everyone expects.

Objectification and interpersonal violence



Graphic provided by: Melody Antel



Photo by: Mariana Searl | Torch Photographer

Melody Antel is a communications intern for the Anti-Violence Alliance.

Anti Violence Alliance student intern explains the levels of sexism

Melody Antel
Guest Writer

The objectification of women has a significant impact on interpersonal violence against women.

Interpersonal violence includes domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking. Viewing women as objects and expecting them to submit to gender norms increases the chances of violence against women.

Calling out objectifications is one way that we can help decrease violence. Objectification can happen in the workplace, in schools, on the streets and in the media. It breaks down a women's worth and takes away our power. We need to make sure our community is not a safe space for objectification, racism, sexism, homophobia and ableism.

Objectification in the workplace also contributes to women being treated poorly and seen as unequal. Sexual comments and inappropriate touching are both ways to put down women and keep the glass ceiling over us, especially in competitive fields.

The same goes for objectification in the classroom and on the streets. Catcalling and sexual jokes are both ways that women are objectified in these spaces.

Dress codes are another way that girls in the classroom are sexualized. The idea behind the dress code is that it will prevent boys from being distracted, and they imply that young women's bodies are sex objects that need to be covered. Dress codes are harmful to young women and are a form of objectification. The sexualization of women in the workplace and schools is a way to keep women from learning and power.

Once I was aware of the extent of objectification, I saw it everywhere I looked. One study I've done was on the objectification seen in the television show "America's Next Top Model." The models are seen as sex objects used to sell products. They are judged for their physique and sex appeal. We see this type of objectification in marketing.

The selling of beautification products is also harmful to women. They encourage one to change their face or body to be

accepted by men and society. We are more than our physical appearance, we are more than an object for the male gaze.

As we realize the expectations society places on us, we begin to self-objectify as well. We see ourselves as an object of pleasure or use. I often submit to self-objectification when I compare myself to others on social media. It's important to not compare yourself to others and support all women, as well as yourself.

We should not be reduced to what we look like. Women's bodies are beautiful, but so are our minds. It's also interesting how we are frequently sexualized, while our sexuality is considered taboo. A woman who is open about her sexuality is "too much," but a woman who is closed about it is "not enough." We need a society that empowers women and doesn't objectify them. In order to have a society like that, everyone has to do their part in creating a safe space for women to thrive.

These harmful portrayals of women allows society to normalize violence against women. Society tends to view sex-

ual assault as extremely harmful, but it normalizes objectification by not seeing it in the same light. Catcalling, inappropriate touching, groping, sending unsolicited nudes, body-shaming, rape jokes and sexual coercion are all examples of sexual violence that society doesn't see as harmful.

In order to prevent the more recognized forms of sexual violence, we need to topple its foundation. Stopping the objectification of women can help prevent further crimes against women.

As a community, we must acknowledge the different experiences that each person endures. The female experience of sexual violence keeps us from success, and objectification is one root of sexual violence. If you see or hear someone objectifying another person, let them know that what they are doing is harmful, or have someone else say something to them. It's possible they won't change their ways, but they need to know that our community is not a safe space for objectification.

Literature for ladies

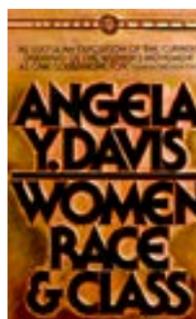
Book recommendations by and for women



"Men Explain Things to Me" by
Rebecca Solnit

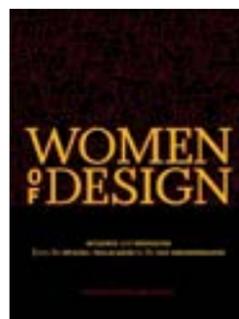
"The Unwomanly Face of War"
by Svetlana Alexievich

History professor Tracy Busch



"Women, Race & Class" by
Angela Davis

Alyssa Myers



"Women of Design: Influence
and Inspiration From The
Original Trailblazers To The New
Groundbreakers" by Armin Vit
and Bryony Gomez-Palacio

Design Professor Alison Popp



"The Second Sex" by Simone
De Beauvoir

"Sacred Pleasure" by Riane
Eisler

"This Bridge Called my Back"
edited by Cherrie Moraga and
Gloria Anzaluda

"Woman on the Edge of Time"
by Marge Piercy

Women and gender studies
professor Laurel Humphrey



"Untamed" by Glennon Doyle
Jessica Oakes

Not “woman” enough

A trans perspective on Women's History Month

Journey Ebels
Guest Writer

I'm usually not one to follow sports. I'm not the athletic type, and there's plenty of other interesting content to consume for me. But I saw a sports story recently that hit a little closer to home, so I thought it'd be important enough to talk about.

There was a post shared by one of my relatives on Facebook the other day about Lia Thomas, a recently-famous trans woman swimmer who won a 500-yard race at a Division I tournament, and how the second place swimmer, Emma Weyent, is the “real winner,” and that “second is the new first. #savewomenssports.” There's a lot of controversy around Thomas and her victory in this race, and it really boils down to one thing: transphobes opposing Thomas don't think of her as a real woman.

This isn't the first instance of controversy in sports around women. According to an article from NPR, there was an Olympic track runner named Caster Semenya who faced similar discrimination during the Olympics last year for having “unnaturally high levels of testosterone.” Semenya, as well as several other women who won medals in the 2016 Olympics, have faced a lot of backlash for existing. They have faced countless cries of them “not really being women,” and while these women are technically intersex, by all other definitions they are women. So which definition is the important one? Should it matter?

This issue extends beyond sports—beyond issues of chromosomes or testosterone—into the lives of women everywhere. There's a societal expectation around existing, as almost every woman has experienced. How you dress, how much makeup you wear, how you act, the interests you have and the job you hold are items on an endless list of female expectations, and if they aren't followed, you are “less of a woman.” Don't know how to cook? Less of a woman. Dress masculine? Less of a woman. Didn't wear makeup to work? Less of a woman. There's a lot of pres-

sure to be a “real woman,” and consequences for being less than range from social ostracism, to lower pay and physical assault because being “less of a woman” ends up translating to “less of a person.”

All these lines and standards are used to justify a lot of injustices and abuse directed towards women across the globe, but even more so for members of the LGBTQ community. I've read story after story about the abuse and assault trans people face across the globe for standing up and saying who they are. There are even countries where it's illegal for them to exist. Even still, we are bombarded by people telling us we're “not trans enough,” even if they “respect” trans people for not getting surgery, or not starting hormones, or not presenting publicly, or not sounding “right” or a whole laundry list of items we need to check to truly be considered “trans,” let alone a woman, man or person.

So many people work to gatekeep the trans community, drawing lines and making regulations that make it really hard to be recognized for who we are. It's tough! And the lines they draw very rarely make sense. Not trans unless you have surgery? Now only the rich can be “really” trans. Not trans unless you present correctly? Now only people from countries where it's legal to be trans can be “really” trans, or people who have families that won't immediately disown them. And what even is presenting “correctly”? We've already gone through the issues of defining what a woman is.

Being a woman is tough, and being a trans woman is even tougher, from the societal vitriol toward Thomas trying to do her best to swim, to the number of women killed for the audacity to be trans. And that's on top of the lines and regulations that women have placed on them by society.

With Women's History Month coming to a close, it's important to acknowledge the struggle, the abuse, the discrimination and the systems that women have had to deal with and fight through in order to earn the rights that men gave freely to themselves. Women have accomplished

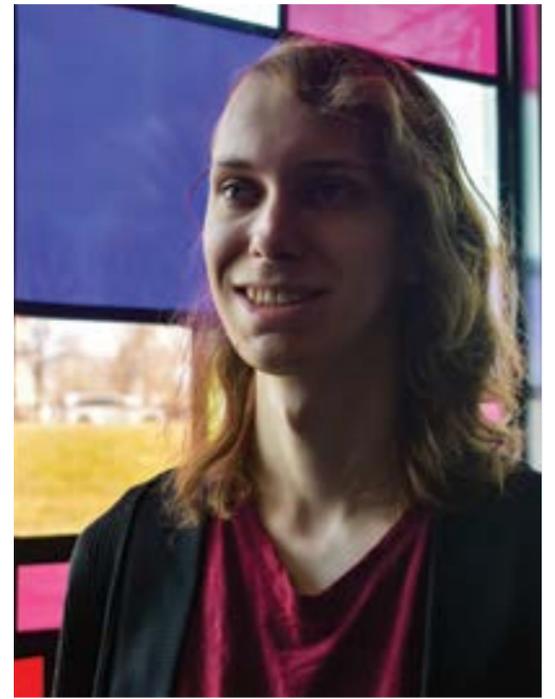


Photo by: Cassie Jessup | Multimedia Editor

amazing things despite the adversity, and those achievements should be celebrated! But imagine the things we could do without having to break down a thousand walls to accomplish them.

I promise you that trans women are not the enemy, despite the hatred and lies said about us. We're in this struggle together. So whenever you see a story in the news about a trans woman like Thomas winning a swim race, remember that we're not trying to invade or take away anything from other women. We're just people trying our best to be ourselves, even when it feels the world is against us. Just like everyone else.



Observing Equal Pay Day

Breaking down the gender pay gap

Rebecca Vanderkooi
Opinions Editor

Equal Pay Day was observed on March 15 in the United States, the earliest it's ever been acknowledged.

According to a proclamation on National Equal Pay Day released on March 14 on the White House's website, this day has existed for over 25 years.

“This year, Equal Pay Day falls on March 15, the earliest we have ever marked the occasion. The earlier that Equal Pay Day arrives, the closer our Nation has come to achieving pay fairness. But while we should celebrate the progress we have made, as I have said in the past, we should not be satisfied until Equal Pay Day is no longer necessary at all,” President Joe Biden wrote.

Pew Research reported that on average in 2020, women earned 84% of what men earned in both full and part-time positions. Based on these numbers, it would take women an extra 42 days to earn what men did.

Furthermore, in 2020, women between the ages of 25-34 earned 93 cents for every dollar a man in the same age group

made. This is compared to 1980 when women in the same age group earned 33 cents less than their male counterparts. While there is still a wage gap, over the past 40 years there has been a 26-cent increase in average pay for women ages 25-34.

Census.gov includes average pay disparities from every state, as well as the country. In Michigan, the yearly average for male earnings is \$53,435 compared to the female average of \$41,560. This means that yearly there is an average pay difference of \$11,875.

In 2017, Pew Research reported that approximately four-in-ten working women said they experienced gender discrimination at work. Additionally, one in four employed women said they earned less than men doing the same job. Only 5% of men had a similar complaint.

Most of the statistics included above compare white women's salaries.

“The disparities are even greater for Black, Native American, Latina and certain subpopulations of Asian women when compared to white men. Disabled women also continue to experience significant dis-

parities and make 80 cents for every dollar compared to men with disabilities,” Biden wrote.

Another subgroup that has experienced more pay disparity is trans women. According to the 19th News, a snapshot poll by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation and a California-based market research firm found that trans women make 60 cents on the dollar compared to all workers.

While there has been progress, there is still discrimination against women, especially women apart of minority groups. Many wonder why the pay gap continues to persist.

According to Pew Research, it is a combination of factors. This can include educational attainment, occupational segregation and work experience.

“Even though women have increased their presence in higher-paying jobs traditionally dominated by men, such as professional and managerial positions, women as a whole continue to be overrepresented in lower-paying occupations relative to their share of the workforce. This may contrib-

ute to gender differences in pay,” Pew Research reported.

Another factor that may impact the wage gap is that many women are mothers, and this can disrupt their career paths. A 2016 survey found that mothers who took leave after having a child or adopting took more time off than fathers. The median length of leave for mothers is 11 weeks, while the average for fathers is one week.

“Mothers were also nearly twice as likely as fathers to say taking time off had a negative impact on their job or career. Among those who took leave from work in the two years following the birth or adoption of their child, 25% of women said this had a negative impact at work, compared with 13% of men,” Pew Research reported.

While Women's History Month is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of women and the advancement in women's rights, it's also important to acknowledge the continued challenges for women, including equal rights with regard to pay.

Women in Gaming

How women protagonists have made gaming history



Angie Rosenthal
Torch Photographer

Video games are commonly regarded as a male-dominated format, both in their target demographic and in their characters. But with each year this outlook is continually changing. According to Statistic, just last year over 45% of gamers were women. Yet despite this rise in women in gaming, the characters on-screen mostly cater to the male demographic. As of 2020, 18% of video game protagonists were female and 23% were male. This is quite the rise in diversity, considering just half a decade ago only 2% of video game protagonists were female. In celebration of the rise in women in gaming and Women's History Month, here are a few of the most iconic female characters in gaming and how they all made gaming history.

Samus – Metroid series – Nintendo

In her debut game “Metroid” from 1986, Samus Aran being a girl was the big twist

of the game. Her gender was revealed after you finish the game, where she takes off her helmet and reveals her long, blonde hair. This was revolutionary in gaming, making her one of the first playable female video game characters. Samus continues to be iconic to this very day, with her most recent gaming venture being last year's “Metroid Dread.”

Lara Croft – Tomb Raider series – Square Enix

Just a decade after Samus Aran's debut, Lara Croft came onto the scene in 1996's “Tomb Raider”. Croft is a '90s icon, whose popularity has lasted to this day. In an era where bit-games were the norm, 1996's “Tomb Raider” changed the game with their innovative 3D graphics, making the “Tomb Raider” franchise one of the most important gaming franchises of all time. Her most recent adventure, “Shadow of the Tomb Raider,” is another award-winning success for Square Enix.

Lady Dimitrescu – Resident Evil Village – Capcom

Lady Dimitrescu has gained an impressive amount of popularity. In “Resident Evil Village” from 2021, Countess Alcina Dimitrescu has only about seventeen minutes of screen-time. Yet her look and demeanor propelled her to internet popularity. On TikTok, #ladydimitrescu has over a billion views. On Instagram, there are over 100 thousand posts about her. In less than a year, Lady Dimitrescu became a gaming icon that is now one of the main faces of the Resident Evil franchise.

Zelda – The Legend of Zelda series – Nintendo

When the first “Legend of Zelda” game debuted in 1986, audiences assumed that the protagonist was Zelda. But, in actuality, the protagonist was named Link, and Zelda was the princess he was saving. It took over two decades for Zelda to become a playable character in her own franchise, which was in 2009's “The Legend of Zelda:

Spirit Tracks.” She has not been playable in her own franchise ever since. This is an example of negative female representation in gaming. It was one step forward when Zelda became the first woman to be the face of a gaming franchise since the '80s, but it was two steps back when they made her mostly unplayable and gave a male protagonist the spotlight instead.

Ellie – The Last of Us 1 and 2 – Sony

Ellie is one of the most important and influential gaming protagonists of this generation because she is the first lesbian protagonist in a triple-A game. A triple-A game means the game has a high budget and is made by a high-profile company; it's basically a gaming blockbuster. The success of The Last of Us series and Ellie's character has changed gaming forever and should lead to more big-name gaming titles with LGBT+ protagonists in the future.

RESOURCES

CAMPUS

Anti-Violence Alliance

Raven Hills:
RavenHills@ferris.edu

Ferris Women's Network

fwn@ferris.edu

National Organization for Women - RSO

You Beautiful Black Women - RSO

Autumn Peoples:
peoplea2@ferris.edu
Zenise Triplett:
triplez@ferris.edu

Title IX Coordinator

231-591-2088

BIG RAPIDS

Women's Information Service (WISE)

231-796-6600
www.wiseagainstviolence.org

MICHIGAN

Michigan Sexual Assault Help Line

1-855-VOICES4

NATIONAL

Futures Without Violence

National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Culture of Respect

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)

Students Active for Ending Rape (SAFER)



LIFESTYLES

Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor | russem22@ferris.edu

If it's too loud, you're too old



Photo by: Dylan Ryder | Torch Reporter

Susmitha Narisetty (left) and Marilyn Johnson (right) convey a story through their performance.

Michigan College of Optometry's first annual talent show

Giuliana Denicolo
Lifestyles Reporter

After months of long study nights, members of the Michigan College of Optometry put down their books to bask in bright stage lights.

On Saturday, March 26, MCO students put on their first ever talent show to bring attention to the National Optometric Student Association.

NOSA is a newly formed association that provides support for minority students to create diversity in healthcare and the optometric profession.

The talent show highlighted how diverse and talented students from the MCO are by including all kinds of acts such as cultural dances, a violin solo, piano ballads and standup comedy.

First year optometry student Marilyn Johnson coordinated and conceptualized this event. She also performed in two acts of Indian Bollywood dancing.

"A lot of Indian dances are about storytelling and expressing. We always like to tell some sort of story," Johnson said.

Johnson performed her first dance with Susmitha Narisetty. It was about two girls dancing in the rain.

She explained that in almost all kinds of Indian dances, one's expression, enthusiasm and energy are important. Narisetty believes that their dance felt like making the best out of a bad day.

The second dance was performed with her boyfriend, Connor Monaghan, in which she took two traditional Bollywood songs and one from her native area in In-

dia and put them together.

Johnson taught Monaghan the dance and says that he has a great sense of rhythm.

"She was a competitive dancer, so she kept me on track," Monaghan said. "She was pretty stringent and meticulous about what it looks like."

Her attention to detail helps her as a dancer, leader and optometry student.

Daniel Taylor, the MCO's interim dean, describes Johnson as a "force."

"She is the type of person who could be a leader in this field for 40 years," Taylor said. "You choose to take that kind of initiative."

In a suit and bowtie, Taylor started off the show with his rendition of "Mack the Knife" by Bobby Darin.

He has been singing for 20 years in many different events, but he still felt butterflies before his performance.

According to Taylor, his wife, who is an opera singer, has helped him expand his talent

"You have to think about controlling your breathing and making sure that you're always in control of what you're doing, and usually it goes away when you're in the middle of it," Taylor said.

He describes the talent show as a win-win for everybody. He joined to show support for NOSA, and also because he enjoys singing and performing.

"I was so happy to see NOSA doing this because it's a new group, but its mission is so important in helping the diversity, equity and inclusion of our profession and of our college," Taylor said.

Emma Kerr performed four songs on the violin. She has been playing for 20 years, but this was the first time any of her fellow students had heard her.

"There's always a little bit of nerves that come along with being on stage, especially in front of a group of all my peers," Kerr said.

Kerr decided to play multiple songs because they were all short pieces of music, but they held a big piece of her heart.

She offered a background story for each song she played.

"The problem is once I get started, it's hard to stop," Kerr said. "I just love playing so much, and with all the studying that I have to do in optometry school, it's so nice to just have a moment to sit down and play."

Paige Webber played "Mama Don't Make Me Put on the Dress Again" by Trixie Mattel on the ukulele.



Photo by: Dylan Ryder | Torch Reporter

Connor Monaghan dips his partner, Marilyn Johnson, in their spectacle of a performance.

Talent show | see page 8

Sexual harassment through Canvas

Learn more about Ferris' efforts to educate students on sexual violence

Giuliana Denicolo
Lifestyles Reporter

Sexual violence is a topic that needs to be talked about, especially on a college campus.

Kaitlin Zies, Ferris' Title IX Coordinator, is the woman behind the curtain of the sexual and interpersonal violence and response course. She arranges the course and directs questions that are associated with its content.

Every student at Ferris gets a request to accept or decline the course on Canvas. According to Zies, the assignment is a crucial part of their anti-violence prevention. The course is also a component of education efforts to follow federal guidance and state laws.

"Most importantly, [SPARC is meant] to engage the entire Ferris community in prevention and, ultimately, [the] elimination of sexual misconduct on our campus and in our community," Zies said.

Failure to complete the course does not result in any direct consequences, however, there is talk of making more learning options available for the course, so students will be more likely to participate.

The SPARC assignment consists of three modules that add up to about an hour of completion. This year, 2,331 students at Ferris have completed the course.

"The first module defines consent and forms of sexual misconduct [like] sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence and stalking and includes information about recognizing and responding to sexual misconduct," Zies said.

After this, the course discusses the university's policies based on sexual violence

and provides information for on and off-campus support.

The third module is more hands-on and gives students scenarios that teaches them ways to say no and how to prevent and help others who may be experiencing sexual violence.

"The third module includes information and scenarios to help students be active bystanders and contribute positively to our campus culture and to the communities they are part of in the future," Zies said.

Overall, the course describes what to do as a bystander and as a victim in these situations, as well as how to acknowledge signs of sexual violence. It also informs students of the resources provided to them on campus.

While this course is helpful and available to all students, the Title XI committee does more to implement education, prevention and awareness of sexual misconduct.

Title IX and the Anti-Violence Alliance work hand in hand to help and educate the Ferris community. According to the AVA's website, there are many events throughout the school year for students, faculty and staff to engage in. The AVA puts together these events "to promote the awareness, education and prevention of relationship violence," according to their website. This is just another part of their efforts to make Ferris and Big Rapids a safer place for everyone.

Sophomore Marisol Benitez is just one of the students who has participated in the SPARC course.

"I thought it was a good way to spread awareness on sexual assault on campus, and it's a good way to inform others," Benitez said. "It's a serious topic that I don't believe gets talked about enough, [and] it's something that shouldn't be hidden."



Photo by: Dylan Ryder | Torch Reporter

Dean of MCO Daniel Taylor plays into the music and adds life to his performance.

TALENT SHOW

Continued from page 7

She has been learning how to play this instrument for about eight months.

"I've always grown up with music, and having a little time at night, or during the weekend, to play is just kind of a way to de-stress after everything," Webber said.

Webber enjoyed seeing the other performers who put themselves out there. She describes the MCO as a great community.

"We're all going through the same stuff. We're all going through it together, and our classes are so small that you get to know everybody so well," Webber said.

She was happy to see the diversity of the acts and was excited about the professors that also participated.

Optometry professor Joe Pole performed a mix of two White Stripe songs on his electric guitar. He has owned a guitar for 20 years, but he doesn't spend too much time playing it. He joined the talent show per his student's request.

"[Given] all of the restrictions that have taken place with the pandemic in the last two years, it's really nice to be able to interact with the students in a way that's not in the classroom," Pole said.

Pole loved the opportunity to see his students in a place that isn't stressful. He described it as a "nice re-

lease."

"The nature of the program [requires you] to do [a lot] to be successful," Pole said. "I think the students really appreciate being able to do something like this."

Johnson was relieved but also sad to reach the end of the beautifully executed talent show.

"All these practices, [performances] and just event organizing, it's all stuff that I have done like almost all my life, and it brought me so much life doing it here," Johnson said. "It brought me so much happiness to even just walk into this room and see this whole thing come together because it was all just an idea I had."

Johnson was surprised by the outcome and overjoyed because it ended up being better than she expected.

Since this event was organized by a group mostly known for studying all the time, Johnson worried not many people would attend.

Johnson's idea of throwing an event like this sprung from her history in dancing and performing.

"I've always very much gone by the fact that if there's not an opportunity, you can make your own opportunities, and I realized that I'm not the only one who grew up [performing] or has things they want to do..."

Her classmates were all very interested in having a talent show when she proposed the idea to them. Everyone had something to do, whether it was performing,

working on tech, making sure everything ran smoothly, setting up and decorating or telling people about the event.

"This wouldn't have been possible without... my execs supporting me throughout the whole event," Johnson said.

As Johnson explained, all of their hard work was worth it, and the show brought her a lot of joy.

President of NOSA, Selena Nehmeh, was as equally impressed and happy with the results. She believed that the performers did a great job, and the whole thing was creative.

She hopes that next year they will get more people to perform and be involved in all aspects of the show.

"As a new club, we get a little nervous putting on a new show, something that we've never done before, but I think it came together perfectly," Nehmeh said. "We just wanted to do something a little different that the school hasn't done before."

Chief of pediatrics Paula McDowell and optometry professor Vandana Rajaram are advisors for NOSA. Their part in the show was to organize, rent and sign. They both give full credit of the talent show to their students and believe their roles were "minor details."

McDowell also was the hostess of the talent show. She looked at her students in awe as they all performed. She thinks that seeing them smile and have a good time outside of class was a totally different experience.

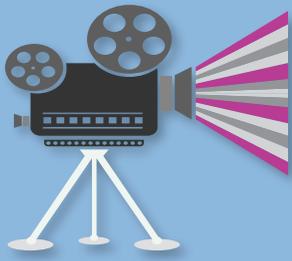
"We see them in the classroom, and we know they're all smart individuals, but it's really nice to see them up there just to get to know them a little bit better, but also to appreciate them more," McDowell said.

As mask restrictions have been lifted, this event was the first time Rajarhm and McDowell have seen their students' full faces. Rajarhm said that seeing the second half of their faces was a totally different perspective for her.

"It's much more relaxed. We are more like peers in this light, rather than a professor and a student so it's wonderful," Rajarhm said.

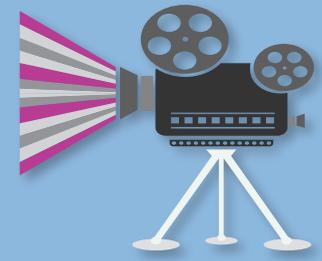
The environment was so friendly that every time one of the performers messed up, they'd laugh it off and everyone else laughed along with them. All the audience members were happy to be there and support their friends.

Jessica Oakes and Dylan Rider contributing to the reporting of this article.



Media Minute

Killing Eve halfway through the season review



Rebecca VanderKooi

Opinions Editor

Spoiler alert: This article contains "Killing Eve" spoilers for the first five episodes of season four.

Since 2018 the BBC drama, "Killing Eve" has been a big hit. The first episode amassed an impressive 8.25 million viewers and has continued to have a large viewership over the past four seasons.

The series has turned the concept of a cat and mouse thriller on its head in the best way possible. "Killing Eve" stars Sandra Oh as Eve Polastri, the MI6 agent with a fascination for the assassin, Villanelle played by Jodie Comer. Villanelle is known not only for her creative murders as a part of the notorious criminal organization, 'The Twelve,' but also her flair for fashion.

One of the most unique facets of this show is the relationship between Eve and Villanelle. While they are rarely together in person it's clear they have feelings for one another in a strange love-hate relationship that's hard to define.

Season three ended with an intense emotional scene between the leading ladies on a bridge in

London where they vow to walk away from each other. As they are physically walking away, they are figuratively separating themselves from each other emotionally. However, in the end, they glance back, seemingly unable to leave the other behind.

After an impactful final episode to season three, fans had high hopes for season four, which was announced to be the final season. Season four shocked many by doing a pretty large time jump for the premier. Eve and Villanelle were far from the bridge and not involved in each other's lives whatsoever. Eve is working for a private security company and Villanelle is trying to change her life and become part of a church.

However, chaos soon finds the duo and they are reunited once again, going back to their usual cat and mouse antics with a hint of angry romance in between. In some ways, it feels that the show is keeping their strange relationship stagnant, rarely allowing them to see one another, like in previous seasons. This is a bit frustrating to viewers as it's the final season and developments or changes within this relationship would be expected.

That all changed in episode five. Eve had been

working with a member of 'The Twelve,' Helene, to try and get to higher-ups in the organization. Eve even 'kidnapped' Helene's daughter for a period of time, although, it's hard to constitute it as kidnapping. It was more like babysitting because the daughter was very happy, however, Helene was not. This finally showed a very concrete way that Eve has changed as a character through the series though.

Helene decided to get back at Eve and realized that Eve's promises that she was over Villanelle were false. So, Helene had Villanelle shot with an arrow in front of Eve. The catch? Eve was in a car, watching the scene unfold, and Helene locked her inside while she desperately tried to get out and help Villanelle. Eventually, Helene allowed Eve out and Eve immediately ran to Villanelle's unconscious body and held her in her lap. For now, everything is unknown regarding the future for the two but there is, finally, some movement in their relationship.

There are now three episodes left in the series and only time will tell what is in store for Eve and Villanelle, their relationship together and how it all ends.

Smiles at the spring play

Ferris' spring play saw the return of smiling faces

Rebecca Witkowski

News Reporter

When Ferris' mask mandate was lifted, one thing was able to return to normal: the spring play.

Over the weekend, the theatre department put on four performances of the play "Bethel Park Falls," written by Jason Pizzarello. For the first time since the pandemic began, the actors were able to perform without masks.

"Everyone was very happy to be performing without masks," Katherine LaPietra, a Ferris professor of theater performance and the director of the play, said. "We had rehearsed the whole process in masks. Taking them off was a great relief to all. It was much easier to enunciate and be understood. It was also quite nice to be fully able to see the actors' expressions, which are wonderful."

The decision to go without masks for the play came after the university lifted the mask mandate for non-instructional spaces. Prior to the lift, the cast and crew had planned on wearing masks during their performances. The decision to perform without masks was made by LaPietra with the support of co-workers and the theater department chair.

The play followed the residents of Bethel as their town park is set to be closed and bulldozed. Residents reminisce about their past experiences in the park, including proposals and father-son fishing trips. They connect with one another over shared experiences and their own dilemmas.

The cast consisted of 19 actors and various backstage crew. The majors of the cast and crew ranged from digital animation and game design, to construc-



Photo by: Angie Rosenthal | Torch Photographer

Bethel Park Falls is about one park and the multitude of people that make up its community. tion management, to mechanical engineering technology.

One of the characters was Glenn, a father whose wife was having an affair while also, unknown to him, battling breast cancer. Glenn was played by Tevin Clum, a senior in the TDMP program. This was Clum's first face-to-face production since the start of COVID-19.

"I feel happy that we're able to perform without our masks," Clum said. "Theatre isn't the same when you can't see the actors' faces. You feel a sort of disconnect from their emotions when you're

masked up. And after being in masks for so long, it's so nice to see everyone's faces. There are some people in the cast that I had never known what they looked like until now, so things like that end up being a small blessing."

LaPietra decided on "Bethel Park Falls" as the spring play after reading the show last year. She thought the play was "funny, heartwarming and gently thought provoking." LaPietra also said the cast size was a good match for the number of actors she anticipated having, and the structure of the play "made the show ide-

al to rehearse during this time of COVID."

"It kept the cast separate, but still able to be part of a whole," LaPietra said. "Also, we could have bought streaming rights to the show if necessary. Not all shows can be streamed, and we had to choose something that could, just in case."

The theater department was able to avoid streaming the show and held performances in person. Audience members got to experience the play as they would have pre-COVID-19.

SPORTS

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

The next quest



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics.

Ferris football unveiled their 2022 schedule on March 21. The quest to defend their national championship title will begin against Central Washington on Sept. 1.

Bulldogs return to the gridiron for spring football events

Brandon Wirth
Sports Reporter

For Ferris football, the pursuit for back-to-back National Championships began on Friday, March 18, with the first spring ball practices.

Not only are the returning players and staff gearing up for the upcoming 2022 fall season, but many graduating players have begun working towards potential careers in the NFL. This spring season will include many ventures, both on and off the field, for current and former Bulldogs.

SPRING PRACTICES UNDERWAY

Head coach Tony Annese's team began their spring practice preparations of the season two weeks ago at Top Taggart Field. The Bulldogs came together for a two and a half hour time slot and participated in non-contact drills and skill sessions for the first time in three months, which was very similar to the team's approach a year ago.

"It was three months ago today we won the National Championship," Annese said. "We have the same goals in regards to approach."

The defending champions have scheduled fifteen practices between the first practice and the annual Crimson and Gold Spring Game on Friday, April 22. Most practices are scheduled for various times on select Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays throughout the 35-day season window. This year's Spring Game will also include a National Championship celebration ceremony that is taking place during the 3 p.m. contest.

For many of the players, just the oppor-

tunity to be back on the field is a blessing. "It's awesome to be back out playing football with the boys," defensive lineman Caleb Murphy said.

SCHEDULE RELEASE

As the spring practices are underway, the Bulldogs will have an opportunity to begin preparing for their 2022 challengers. The official fall schedule was released on March 21, revealing the Bulldogs' 10 scheduled opponents for the upcoming season.

Ferris will begin the season with a Sept. 1 home test against Central Washington, a team the Bulldogs beat on the road in a nationally televised 2019 contest. Week two brings another 2021 playoff team in Lenoir-Rhyne, which will be the first matchup between the two schools. Following a week three bye week, the Bulldogs will return to Top Taggart for homecoming against the Waldorf Warriors on Sept. 24 and then hit the road for a pair of away games against former conference foe Findlay and fellow GLIAC opponent Saginaw Valley.

Oct. 15 will then be a date of destiny: the Anchor-Bone classic at home versus rival Grand Valley. The final slate of conference games to finish the regular season includes home games against Michigan Tech and Davenport and away games versus Northern Michigan and Wayne State. From there, Ferris will potentially enter the Division II postseason on Nov. 19.

"This year's schedule will be a test once again," Annese said. "We look forward to battle some of the country's top programs."

SPECIAL DONOR EVENT

One unique addition that the Bulldogs

will add this pre-season comes off the field. In partnership with the Andy Talley Bone Marrow Foundation and Be The Match Registry, Ferris Football will take part in registering to potentially help patients in need of blood stem cell donations.

"This event is a way for our student athletes to participate in a program that can help give back and assist those in need of potential life saving support," Annese said.

Football will be joined by other Ferris athletic programs for the registration event, which will take place on April 7 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. inside Wink Arena.

While the organization specializes in collegiate athletics recruitment, the event will include a second session from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. that will be open for the general public. The registration will take place in the IRC building for the one-hour window.

BULLDOGS AT PRO DAY

As many Bulldogs return to the field for the upcoming collegiate season, there are select graduates that had the opportunity to showcase their skills in front of NFL scouts at local Pro Day events. This includes common NFL combine drills like the 40-yard dash as well as position specific tests.

On Tuesday, March 15, four Ferris athletes performed at Central Michigan University alongside two former Saginaw Valley players and ten Chippewas. The players included defensive back Alex Thomas, offensive linemen Dylan Pasquali and Zein Obed, and wide receiver and kicker Sy Barnett.

Alongside these four participants, six other Bulldogs traveled to Saginaw Valley State's Pro Day on March 15. These in-

clude linebackers Liam Daly and John Higgins, running back Tyler Minor, defensive lineman Austin Simpson, defensive back Cyntell Williams, and fellow NFL free agent Jake Lampman.

"Our guys did very well," Annese said on the pro day performances. "Their measurables speak for themselves."

According to Pro Football Reference, Ferris has had 13 former players reach the professional levels since 1978. The most recent Bulldog was former GLIAC Defensive Player of the Year Austin Edwards, who has made the practice squads for both the Atlanta Falcons and the Kansas City Chiefs.

The NFL draft will take place from April 28 to April 30 in Paradise, Nevada. Once the draft is completed, NFL teams may begin signing undrafted free agents.

NEW PATH, SAME MENTALITY

As the spring festivities continue, so does the hype for the 2022 season. Players from the past and future have shared their pleasure of the championship, including many wishing luck to the program for the upcoming campaign. Coming into their first season as defending national champions, there is no doubt Ferris will have a target on their back; however, the players are ready for the challenge.

"It isn't too much different," quarterback Mylik Mitchell told the media. "Just a little more weight on us."

To follow Bulldog football, visit the "Football" tab at ferrisstatebulldogs.com.

SCORECARD

Men's Tennis

March 25 - Ferris 6, Michigan Tech 1
March 26 - Ferris 6, Lake Superior State 1

Women's Tennis

March 25 - Ferris 4, Michigan Tech 3
March 26 - Ferris 4, Lake Superior State 3

Softball

March 21 - Findlay 12, Ferris 4
March 21 - Findlay 19, Ferris 7
March 27 - Games postponed

Captain MacDougall goes pro

The former Bulldog hockey player gets one step closer to the show



Dylan Rider
Sports Reporter

Former hockey captain Liam MacDougall has signed with the Cincinnati Cyclones of the ECHL.

MacDougall served as a Bulldog captain for two of the five years he was with Ferris. In those five years, MacDougall put up 14 goals, 33 assists and 47 points in 133 games.

MacDougall finished his time at Ewingleben Ice Arena against Michigan Tech on Feb. 18 and 19. The Bulldogs lost both games in overtime and went on to finish their season 11-24-1.

MacDougall skated as a Bulldog for the last time on March 5 in a CCHA playoff loss against Michigan Tech.

"The biggest thing for me that will keep me up [at night about] Ferris is not being able to make it out of the first round of the playoffs in any of my five years," MacDougall said. "I thought we had teams capable of doing that."

Despite this year's shortcomings, he was proud of the response that the team brought throughout the campaign and said that the team was "fun to be around".

The best record MacDougall saw was a 14-23-1 record from his freshman year.

For MacDougall, his time at Ferris is officially in the past, as he has already started in four ECHL games.

"I'm always excited when the guys sign and get an opportunity to play professionally," head coach Bob Daniels said. "I'm excited for him. I've actually been texting back and forth with him. I congratulated him on his first professional goal he scored last weekend."

Daniels emphasized how important MacDougall was to the team, even if the numbers didn't reflect

that. Daniels also added that MacDougall's maturity, mentality and leadership could give him a "really nice" professional career.

MacDougall joins former Bulldog Jason Tackett on the Cyclones. Tackett, who is currently inactive, played 114 games for the Bulldogs between 2016 and 2020.

In the ECHL, scouting is usually done through the head coach.

"Our job is to scour the NCAA market and see the players that are out there that fit the mold and fit what we're looking for," Cyclones head coach Jason Payne said. "Being able to follow Liam's progression in La Salle in the GOJHL and being at Ferris State for the five years he was there [and] being the captain the last two years, that speaks volumes for a player."

Payne mentioned MacDougall's improvement over his career. He had six points in his first season, but he put up 17 points in his final year.

"It just shows what kind of character and what kind of person he is," Payne said. "[He was able] to come in here and fit in seamlessly with our organization, with our lineup [and] with our culture. That's a feather in his cap."

Fellow Bulldog captain Ethan Stewart also recently signed with the Tulsa Oilers.

"I reached out to Ethan to say congratulations," MacDougall said. "But, I think it's pretty cool. There will probably be times where I will give him a look on the ice, maybe slash him in the legs. Something light for a little bit of fun. He's a great player. I'm very happy and proud of his time there in Tulsa."

MacDougall's future in hockey is seemingly bright. Coaches, both current and former, have high praise for the former Bulldog.

Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics.

Liam MacDougall played his final home game for Ferris on Feb. 19 against Michigan Tech. Now, he joins the Cincinnati Cyclones in the ECHL.

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Senior special

Joe Nagy
Sports Reporter

The Ferris Men's Tennis team honored their seniors with a dominating back-to-back performance in the second week of GLIAC competition.

Ferris won the weekend 12-2 over two matches, beating Michigan Tech 6-1 on Friday and Lake Superior State 6-1 the following day, moving to 11-2 (3-0 GLIAC).

Seniors Ayush Deswal, Mathis Guerre and Josh McDermott shared a moment with head coach Mark Doren following Saturday's senior day victory over Lake Superior State.

"Senior day reminded me of many good memories that I have made in the past four years with such a great team," Deswal said. "This is going to stick with me for the rest of my future."

"It was an outstanding day," Doren said. "The men started out the day with a convincing win over a much-improved Lake Superior State team and followed the match with a great ceremony celebrating the seniors after the contest."

On Friday, Mathis Guerre and Jan Koupil made quick work of their opponents with a 6-0 finish that gave the team early momentum to carry throughout the day.

Benjamin Lortie and Alessandro Santangelo got out to a quick 5-0 lead, but some serving struggles allowed the Huskies to steal two sets. However, Lortie and Santangelo closed the set with a win.

The final doubles pairing was the senior duo of Ayush Deswal and Josh McDermott. The two went back and forth and watched the Huskies take a 5-4 lead. However, the Bulldog duo rallied back and won 6-5.

Guerre got the team started in singles play with two 6-1 victories over Michigan Tech's freshman Adam Fenjiro. Koupil and Yannick Mader followed with wins for Ferris as well.

Despite picking up the first set 7-6 on court four, Deswal fell in three sets to Andrew Freel. A consis-

tent effort pushed the final set all they way to 10-12, but a few well placed shots from Freel gave the Huskies their first and only win of the day.

Alec Olivier closed out day one with a three-set comeback. A 6-3 loss in the first set pushed him to 5-7 and 10-7 wins.

"Michigan Tech is a much improved team and we knew it would be a tough matchup," Doren said.

The team took two out of the three doubles matches with the lone loss coming from Guerre and Koupil, their first loss at home when they play together.

Guerre and Koupil both bounced back in singles play with victories. Guerre won in two sets, 7-5 and 6-4, and Koupil did the same, with 6-2 and 6-3 victories.

"For the men to go into a match where they know they're the favorite, but to still play really well was important," Doren said.

Mader won the first set 6-4 thanks to numerous strong backhand shots. He shut the door on his opponent in the second set with a clean 6-2 win to put another point on the board for the Bulldogs.

Lortie and McDermott made their return to singles after taking a seat in Friday's matches. McDermott won his match 6-2 in both sets, and Lortie beat his New Zealander counterpart with a pair of 6-1 performances.

Santangelo lost to Aaron Osmond of Lake State to give the Lakers their lone point of the day. He came back after losing 6-4 in the first to win a dominating second set 6, but ultimately lost 10-8.

Ferris will be tested when they hit the road this weekend to face Davenport on April 1.

"Friday we play Davenport. Davenport's ranked in the top 20 for the first time in school history," Doren said. "I think it's important to get a win and to be able to go positively into a week of practice."

Doren and the men's team welcomes the opportunity to play a strong Davenport team. With just five matches left before the GLIAC tournament, it is a welcome test.



Photo by: Joe Nagy | Sports Reporter

Senior Josh McDermott serves against Lake Superior State on senior day.

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