



The Ferris State Torch

92 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

Week of Mar. 22–Mar. 28, 2023

www.fsutorch.com

Students march on César E. Chávez Ave



Photo by: Jessica Oakes | News Editor

Ferris faculty, students and family members gathered in Grand Rapids to honor the farmer and activist.

Jessica Oakes
News Editor

As red and white balloons soared over the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, hundreds of Michigan students embarked on the 13th annual César E. Chávez March.

Honoring what would have been Chávez's 96th birthday, Ferris' Center for Latin@ Studies sent roughly 50 students from Big Rapids to last Wednesday's march and subsequent community gathering.

Chávez's catch phrase "¡Si se puede!" meaning "Yes, it is possible!" was chanted throughout the mile long march.

"It's a story like César Chávez's that's really going to hit home for some of our students, especially those that are coming from different countries," CLS Interim Director Sonia Trevino said. "Know that you can come to the United States, build a life for yourself and be highly successful."

"From humble beginnings, Chávez created greatness." This was the common thread running through each social justice event hosted in Grand Rapids for the notable civil rights and farm labor leader. Chávez was remembered as an "American hero" for his nonviolent activism, which he began in the early 1960s.

Like many other Latin Americans, Chávez did farm work to support his family. After working in harsh labor conditions for minimal pay in California, he wanted to help protect other farm workers like himself. He co-founded and led the United Farm Workers of America for over three decades.

Chávez is most notably remem-

bered for his strikes on grape and lettuce crops and his fasting. His longest period of fasting lasted for 36 days, during which he ate no food and drank only water. This led to his death at age 66 in 1993.

Communication professor Dr. Stephanie Thomson has invited her students to the march for years. Proudly displaying the UFW's logo on a t-shirt from the first march in 2010, Thomson cheered in the streets with students, CLS employees and her own young daughter.

"There is a growing Latinx population [in Michigan]. I think it only serves our students to make them more familiar with different customs, different cultural expectations," Thomson said.

Thomson also remarked to her students that Michigan farmers still lack the protections that Chávez fought to give those on the West Coast.

The march began at 1204 César E. Chávez Ave at 11 a.m. Children from Potter's House Christian School lined up behind their playground fence to watch the procession. The young onlookers could see flags from across Latin America and signs with the UFW's iconic black eagle or the word "HUELGA," meaning strike.

One marcher brought her own group of young activists to last week's events: her school age children. Massiel Calderon calls herself a "non-traditional" student. Calderon moved her family to Michigan from New York less than two years ago. She is a senior studying English and creative writing who works as a Promesa Scholars coordinator in the CLS.

It was no tough decision for

Calderon to excuse her children from school last Wednesday, as she saw great educational value in the march.

"Living in New York, they speak about so many social justice warriors that César was not a focus," Calderon said about her children's upbringing. "It was good for them to see someone that made a change the way Martin Luther King did, but for the Hispanic and Latino community."

Calderon's vision of social justice rests on an original philosophy.

"If you want space for yourself, you have to be willing to give it to someone else," Calderon said.

After the march, all attendees gathered in the Potter's House Chapel for speeches from several guests, including Representative Hillary Scholten, D-Grand Rapids.

"I want to know who among you will be the next César Chávez, the next representative, the next social justice mover and shaker in our community," Scholten said. "I hope that us working together today will continue to inspire all of us to make Michigan a stronger and more just space together."

Special guest Melvin Butch Hollowell, a Detroit based attorney and nephew of Martin Luther King's attorney, also spoke. His address brought all in the chapel to their feet as he called for the citizenship of "DREAMers." These are undocumented immigrants who entered the US under the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act in 2001.

To learn more about on-campus cultural events, visit the CLS office in IRC 131.

FFA and Ferris reach \$800,000 settlement

Course capacity grievances settle after thirteen months

Jessica Oakes
News Editor

The Ferris Faculty Association signed a settlement with the university last Wednesday, allocating roughly \$816,000 to over 70 professors.

All professors receiving this compensation work in the College of Business or the College of Arts, Sciences and Education. At this time, the individual payouts range from \$962 to \$12,825.

This settlement follows thirteen months of grievances filed by the FFA on both an individual and association level.

Four days before the 2022 spring semester, professors were notified that the number of students allowed in their online classes would be raised to the university standard set for face-to-face classes.

"This isn't faculty fighting because they want to do less work," FFA Vice President John Caserta said. "These historical course caps were set after committees [for] two and a half years studied the best modality, the best pedagogy for teaching students in a class."

Caserta handles all grievances put forward by the FFA. Records show that four sections of his own virtual English course were increased by four to five students each since last spring. This is a small margin compared to two sections of the popular culture course HUMN-240, which each experienced a capacity overage of 26 students.

This settlement is a "Band-Aid" placed on a larger problem, according to Caserta. To reach an agreement, Caserta and FFA President Dr. Charles Bacon agreed to a 20% increase in online course capacity.

"We just needed to get this done for the students' sake so students wouldn't be in classes that were double the size in some instances," Caserta said.

The path leading up to last week's settlement was extensive. At the time of reporting, faculty members still have the opportunity to review and potentially amend the terms of their compensation.

"[Bacon] and [Caserta] spent

a tremendous amount of time working on this. I am happy that both sides worked together and a settlement was reached," FFA executive board member Holly Price said.

On behalf of the administration, Provost Bobby Fleischman expressed his satisfaction with the settlement.

"We're very pleased about the settlement, and, while it's taken longer than we would have liked, the settlement represents a positive step in our work moving forward with our faculty, students and the university with regard to productive discussions on teaching and learning," Fleischman said.

Fleischman was not present for grievance discussions. Instead, Associate Provost of Faculty Operations Steven Reifert works with the FFA to discuss grievances and settlements. He called his recent interactions with the union "collegial" and "agreeable."

"When you enter into these things, you try to come up with the solution that's best for the students, for the faculty [and] for the university," Reifert said.

The alternative to a settlement would be a move to arbitration. This involves inviting an impartial third party to put an end to negotiations outside of the court system.

Reifert believes that the settlement may quell accusations of violating faculty rights outlined in the association contract.

"Course caps are not enumerated in the collective bargaining agreement," Reifert said. "[The FFA] were arguing we violated their academic freedom... I think the settlement kind of stands for itself. We came to an agreement on what that possible violation was and again for the betterment of the students and who we serve and the university, I think this was the route to go."

Select FFA members are still unsatisfied with the 20% increase in class sizes and intend to justify a return to the original cap. Follow future additions of the Torch for future updates.



News

Jessica Oakes | News Editor | oakesj3@ferris.edu

Anti-Violence Alliance facing financial failure



Photo by: Torch archives

Sydney Mingori tabled in the fall to educate Ferris students on the AVA.

Organization for violence prevention loses grant funding

Nolan Harris
News Reporter

The 2023 spring semester marks the end of certain grants that the Anti-Violence Alliance relies on for funding.

The AVA's administration is in the midst of deciding how they will finance their staff and operations at Ferris. With their \$50,000 grant ending, the AVA will not be able to fund their peer educators or their violence prevention coordinator, neutering their presence on campus. In the coming weeks, the AVA is looking to Ferris and other grants for funding.

The AVA is a branch of Title IX at Ferris that can be found on the second floor of the Birkham

Health Center. They are responsible for Ferris' sexual assault preventative measures.

"Our peer educators do a lot of presentations," AVA staff leader Sydney Mignori said. "We do a lot of bystander intervention curriculum for sports teams and fraternities... We are trying to change the campus climate around interpersonal violence and what you should do in potentially dangerous situations."

It is reported that the Ferris administration is working to ensure that the AVA stays afloat financially. They recognize the importance of the role the group serves on campus.

"Ferris was never in a position where they were not willing to help," AVA's Interim Project Direc-

tor Andrew Slater said. "Before they say, 'Let's write a check,' they want to see if we can offset the costs, and that's where the grants come in."

Without the AVA, the Title IX coordinators office would be Ferris' sole organization for sexual violence issues. Currently, Title IX focuses on sexual violence intervention rather than violence prevention.

While many of the specifics of how the AVA will be financed are still being hashed out and the replacing grants will not be known until October, Slater still feels confident about the AVA's place within Ferris.

"There is a lot of federal regulation that requires Ferris to do a lot of the things the AVA

is doing," Slater said. "I have no concerns that [the] AVA is not going to be on campus in the fall."

The value that the AVA brings to campus is also felt by the student body.

"I think it is so important, and it has really impacted women's sports... The fact that we may lose another resource is sad," sports communication sophomore Jessica Angelo said. "I feel like we need the AVA, especially in college with everything that goes on for the girls in sports."

Other students feel it is important that there be outreach and education that the AVA provides, specifically for athletic organizations and fraternities,

where there is a reputation for sexual violence.

The ripple effect of the AVA is felt as students look for careers as well.

"If I hadn't met peer educators in one of my classes and worked with them to get a position here, I don't know what my focus would be in my field," Ferris alumna and AVA violence prevention coordinator Melody Antel said. "The AVA has absolutely driven my passion for preventative work."

While the AVA is in a precarious spot financially, the organization is hopeful that they will still be able to provide services to Ferris with the help of university financing and possible grants.

Keeping yourself safe

DPS officer talks about free two-day self defense program on campus

Ember St. Amour
News Reporter

Ferris' Department of Public Safety will be hosting their first Rape Aggression Defense training since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

RAD is a two-day class that will be held on March 25 and 26. Students, faculty and community members are offered the opportunity to participate in the program. According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, 13% of college students experience some form of sexual assault while on campus through violence, force or incapacitation.

The RAD program is available throughout the US to help teach communities self-defense techniques. While the program's cost varies depending on the location,

Ferris offers the training for free.

DPS officer Nicholas Greenway has been teaching the program for 13 years. There is a physical aspect of the training, according to Greenway. Participants can practice what they learn to further learn how their skills can be used.

"We incorporate all those skills [they learned] at the end of the second day into three different scenarios to where we put on a big Redman suit, and it looks like a big, padded turtle suit and the students put on protective gear as well," Greenway said. "And that gives you the opportunity to hit somebody 80%, not as hard as you can, but you can go pretty much full out to see what it feels like to actually hit somebody and utilize those techniques."

This training is both physically

and mentally demanding.

"It's mentally challenging as well because we're going to address a lot of things that maybe [are] not talked about all the time and what you can do to keep yourself safe," Greenway said. "We're going to learn the risk awareness reduction and avoidance strategy... What that means is... what can you do to protect yourself to be more aware when you're walking on campus? In your own hometown? Around your dorm? Maybe your own residence within the city? What can you do to avoid it?"

Greenway explained some of the skills and practices that participants can learn. Some of these are making sure to walk with someone else, especially late at night, and to stay off your phone while walking. Greenway

also mentioned that the course will slightly touch on alcohol safety and date rape drugs.

Anyone looking to take a refresher course for free may take one anywhere RAD is taught as long as they keep the booklet given to them at the training, according to Greenway. He recommends that the course be taken once a year.

"We also offer an option to just come in for the scenarios," Greenway said. "You know if you just want to... do it one more time to kind of hone your skills... If you don't train and practice, eventually you're going to lose it."

Anyone who is interested in taking the course but is nervous to take it alone can always bring a friend. According to Greenway, taking the course with a friend helps increase your confidence

and allows you to feel less stressed.

The recommended attire is loose, comfortable clothing. Greenway explained that there is a lot of physical activity involved with the program, so participants will want to feel comfortable. He also recommended that participants bring a water bottle and snacks, as the training takes place over several hours each day.

Those looking to sign up can call (231) 591-5000 by March 24. For more information about the program, visit the RAD page on the Ferris DPS website. For those who want to sign up but are unable to this semester, DPS plans to hold another RAD training in the fall.

Drying up the rumors

What happens to long forgotten library books?

Meghan Hartley
News Reporter

Rumors that books from FLITE are turned into drywall are creating a stir within the Ferris community.

This rumor derives from the comment that library books were being thrown out of specific sections, even though they could still be used for student research.

Ferris history professor Tracy Busch strongly encourages her students to use FLITE's print material when completing the research projects she assigns. Busch learned that if books are not checked out, they are thrown away, resold to wholesalers or even turned into insulation for houses.

Ferris' history department confronted the library about throwing away important materials that could be used for student research.

"They admitted that they were doing it, but there was nothing that we could do to stop it," Busch said. "We did research and showed that their theory was wrong, and they decided to go behind our backs and pull the books they think are old and no good anymore. That might be true in many disciplines, but in history a lot of times the older the book the better because it's from the time period that you're researching."

Busch says these conversations with the library started in 2013 when she and the history department first learned about the disposal of books from their specific section. There has been a change in who runs the library and the turn-around for books to be removed from shelves. Currently, she

does not know if the destruction of books is still occurring or if things have changed.

Mari Kermit-Canfield, FLITE's creative learning librarian and coordinator of research services, was upset to hear the rumor that books were being destroyed, as she says FLITE does its best to continue updating its collection.

"We take our collection seriously," Kermit-Canfield said. "It is meant to support our current students', faculty and staff needs. We are not destroying books, we are celebrating them and keeping our collection current, alive and useful."

Kermit-Canfield says FLITE keeps its collection current through a process called weeding. Weeding is the systematic removal of resources from a library based on selected criteria. The library's criteria to remove a book is a combination of how old the material or subject is, how relevant the information is and how long it has been since the book has been checked out.

It takes 45 to 60 years for a book to be completely weeded and recycled from a library's collection. At the moment, Kermit-Canfield says, the library is currently weeding out a collection of books received from a smaller university that closed years ago.

"What happened was another small university closed in the '60s, and FLITE didn't exist at that time. It was the Timme Library, and that library took all of the university's books. These books were published in the '60s or earlier, and a lot of them are stuff like 'Michigan's Best Accounts of 1962.' That's not really content

that is valuable, and it's taking up space on our shelves."

Kermit-Canfield says that while they have a large collection of books from the '60s, not all of them will be weeded. It is up to the discretion of the subject librarian to see if the book is still relevant to the other information they already have.

"It isn't like things are just removed based on their weeding schedule," Kermit-Canfield said. "Each title is like that individually, and then if there's a new edition, maybe the older one is removed. It's a careful process."

David Scott, FLITE's outreach and user engagement librarian, says they have not done any large-scale, systematic weeding in five to six years since the writing and tutoring center moved in, and try to do it when there is a reason to.

While large-scale removal does not happen every semester, books are still removed from shelves on a smaller scale.

"Maybe a few books that get damaged, water damage or things like that, [are removed]. So it's certainly not very many, it's going to be very, very minimal in the past four or five years, probably in the 10s," Scott said.

With over 700,000 pieces of informational material, FLITE uses two databases to help in their weeding process: Alma and MI-SPI. The Alma library system helps catalog print and electronic materials. It helps the librarians and student workers easily see all their books, years published and years at FLITE. Plus, it can help determine whether something should be

removed for further review. The second database, MI-SPI, helps connect libraries across Michigan collaboratively to maintain print editions of books.

"This is a group of academic libraries that do their thing in a shared process," Kermit-Canfield said. "So if we know a book is going to be weeded, then maybe two academic libraries agree to keep that book forever, and the rest of the libraries remove it because we have the ability to transfer books between libraries. So that way these books are available in Michigan very quickly, and we're not losing the material. It's just not at Ferris, it might be at Central, or U of M or maybe GVSU."

Deleted: Scott says that once books have been weeded out of sections, they will then look at the section and determine if there is still enough material to be read and learned from. If they believe the section needs to be replenished, the library will then purchase new books.

Deleted: Students also have the opportunity to request books if they can be found in other university libraries, as their input helps the librarians know which books and information students are most looking for.

Many factors go into the process of weeding out a single book within the library. It is up to the communication of students, faculty and staff to see if the right books are staying and the right books are being delivered somewhere else to be better suited in academic research.

Big Rapids city grosses 3rd highest marijuana tax revenue in state

Noah Kolenda
Editor in Chief



Recreation tax collected in 2022



Total licenses by the end of 2022



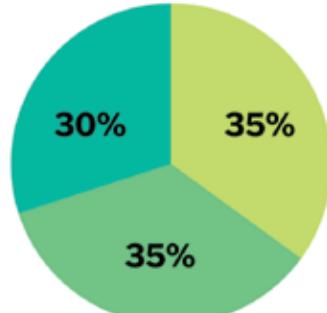
Total sales statewide in 2022

Both Big Rapids & Mecosta County get back →

\$881,301

How it's spent...

- K-12 Education
- Discretionally
- Michigan Roads



Facts provided by the Cannabis Regulatory Agency

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Aimee Miller

Jonathon Hart
News Reporter

Communication professor Aimee Miller has been turning heads throughout campus this year as people learn about the places she has lived, her theories on fandoms and her new role as the speech and debate advisor.

LIVING OUTSIDE THE US

Many people can only imagine living outside the US, but Miller made the dream a reality. Miller lived in Nagoya, Japan for two and a half years. She also lived in Wellington, New Zealand for a summer internship.

Miller loved to travel whenever she could and enjoyed living in both countries, as it opened her eyes and increased her cultural sensitivity.

Miller brought many things back from these countries that weren't specifically tourist souvenirs.

"I'm not much of a collector," Miller said. "I tended to buy items that I could use. For example, I've got a teapot that I treasure from Japan. A student bought it for me as a gift. I've got kitchenware, like forks from Hong Kong and mugs from Korea. My purse broke and I bought a beautiful hand-made bag from Vietnam. My apartment is filled with a hodge-podge of items from other countries, stuff that I needed that made sense for me to buy."

Miller was able to pick up some hobbies while being outside of the US, which helped her while she was away from family and friends.

"I did pick up the hobby of writing letters and postcards," Miller said. "It was a lot of fun for me to walk around the markets and find art, postcards, stationary, the kind of local stuff that I could write a little update message on and send to friends or family. I liked personalizing it and picking out something that I thought that person would like. It kept me grounded and connected to my friends back home."

Psychology junior Tyler VanEss is a part of the speech and debate team. They've noticed

Miller's appreciation for different cultures.

"[Miller] always seems really curious and eager to learn about any new culture she comes across," VanEss said. "She is absolutely respectful and careful to not accidentally say or do something that would be upsetting to whichever culture she is interacting with."

FANDOMS

A fan writer is a person who writes fictional stories within the universe of their favorite shows, movies or books. The term is used to distinguish writers of fanfiction from writers of original fiction. Miller enjoys writing fanfiction because she can truly analyze a specific text.

"Fan studies is an interdisciplinary field that focuses on fan behaviors, fan cultures, fan activities and fans in general," Miller said. "It's a fascinating and dynamic area of study that encompasses a diverse array of interests."

Miller became involved with fanfiction at age ten. Her love for it blossomed as she grew older.

"I've produced nearly a million words of fan-fiction for various fandoms," Miller said. "When I was in college, I was chatting with one of my mentors about potential topics for a large thesis-type project that I needed to complete for the honors program... She encouraged me to capitalize upon my specialized knowledge in this area. The project was only supposed to be thirty pages, but I had so much fun with researching and writing it that I ended up writing sixty pages – eighty if you count the references. I have other research interests, [such as] intercultural communication, interpersonal communication [and] argumentation and forensics, but I always seem to come back to fan studies."

Miller is grateful for the mentor that gave her the support she needed.

"She seemed genuinely interested in my thoughts," Miller said. "I thought fan-fiction was a nerdy practice with some stigma behind it, but she validated my



Photo provided by: Aimee Miller

Aimee Miller (left) coaches students on Ferris' competitive speech and debate team.

ideas and pushed me to move forward."

Miller received an award from the Central States Communication Association for her research on identity exploration within online fandoms in 2021. Miller has gone to conferences all over the US to talk about fanfiction. Her most famous appearance is when she returned to her alma mater Monmouth University to speak on fanfiction and censorship in 2021.

SPEECH AND DEBATE

Miller has taken the speech and debate circuit by storm as a competitor and a coach. Miller got into speech and debate when she was in high school to help overcome her fear of public speaking.

"The first year was a real struggle," Miller said. "I dropped my papers, lost my place, could never make the time and felt sick whenever I had to give a speech. But I kept at it. Eventually, something clicked, and I began to thrive at tournaments. By the end of high school, not only was I confidently [speaking publicly], but I was actively falling in love with the activity. I kept the momentum going and joined the speech and debate team in college."

Miller found great success at Monmouth during her competition years, doing impressively well in impromptu and persuasive speaking. Once Miller was done competing, she decided to continue her love for speech and debate from a different approach.

"I love the activity," Miller said. "Speech and debate is inherently rooted in advocacy, and it helps students to find their

unique voices. There's something awing about watching a student grow in this way. I feel honored to be a part of it. In addition, I think speech and debate is a transformational activity that has long-lasting impacts on those who participate in it. I'm passionate about mentorship, and speech and debate allows me [to form] a mentor/mentee relationship with the students in a way that traditional classroom teaching does not."

VanEss has been shown many times by Miller that no matter what happens, he needs to be proud of himself, which has made him stronger at competitions.

"[Miller] constantly reminds me to be proud of what I've accomplished and how I've grown," VanEss said. "Seeing her be open about things most people would keep hidden influences me to be more true to myself and to not care about what others think."

Digital animation and game design freshman Morgan Keller is also a member of the Ferris State forensics team and has heard many stories from Miller.

"I could talk about how she had her hair eaten by a monkey, how she's [drunken] snake blood or how she swam through a field of jellyfish," Keller said. "I could talk about how she has a whole fantastical and ever-growing mythology tied to her, including fleeing from the FBI. While these are amazing, I'm not sure they truly highlight what makes her stand out."

Keller believes that Miller has done a lot for her and her teammates.

"Though she has taught me

and my teammates so much when it comes to speech and debate, she has also taught us so much about working with one another and has created an environment where we are allowed to be ourselves and work with one another," Keller said. "Very rarely have I seen someone easily accept so many personalities in one space."

PAST AND PRESENT

Kristi Scholten, a communication professor and Miller's close friend, has the utmost respect for Miller and all she does for her team.

"She really puts the team's needs before her own, giving up her evenings and weekends to work with the team, drive them to tournaments, etc," Scholten said. "As a former coach, I know that it isn't easy to balance the different spheres of your life... It is easy to burn out. [Miller] brings an energy to the team that we haven't seen in many years, and it is infectious."

Monmouth University communication professor Trudi Peterson was a former colleague of Miller's and talked about how Miller stood out from other people.

"I first met [Miller] when she interviewed for a scholarship at Monmouth College while she was still in high school," Peterson said. "What stands out to me the most from that interview was that her responses to questions were detailed and nuanced; her passion for learning along with nascent critical thinking skills was clearly evident. Since that time, I have been able to witness her academic growth and personal development."

ON THE RECORD

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

Jessica Oakes
News Editor

BYE-BYE BENJAMIN

March 16, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. - An instance of larceny was reported in lot 9G by Bishop Hall. A \$100 bill was allegedly stolen from a student's vehicle. The case was closed due to a lack of leads.

DOMESTIC REPORT ON FAMILY DRIVE

March 16, 4:05 p.m. - One student at Finch Ct. of West Campus Apartments reported a domestic altercation after overhearing a couple arguing. Officers arrived to find out that no physical altercation had occurred, and the case was considered unfounded.

FORGOTTEN ASSAULT

March 13, 2:30 – 5:30 a.m. - A student at Ward Hall reported a possible assault but retained no memory of the incident. Without any footage of the alleged assault, the case was closed due to a lack of leads.

MAIL CALL

Feb. 11 - March 1, time unknown - Larceny of mail was reported from North Hall. The case is still under investigation.

SNATCHED BACKPACK

Feb. 25 - 9:15 p.m. - A student's backpack was stolen from the Rock Café and returned shortly after. The offender was sent to judicial referral.

Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

Putting together a show

A look into Ferris' spring play 'She Kills Monsters'

Harmony Goodman
Freelance Reporter

The Ferris Theatre Department is taking the stage for its final show of the 2022-23 school year. With opening night around the corner, the cast and crew are preparing and working around the clock.

At 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 23, at the Williams Auditorium, the "Dungeons and Dragons" inspired play "She Kills Monsters," written by Qui Nguyen, will be performed by Ferris' Theatre Department. The play tells the story of an older sister's journey to learn more about her recently deceased sister through her sister's D&D game, and includes both sword fights and puppets.

Theatre Director Katherine LaPietra and Technical Designer Sarah Aker chose this show for the spring play because of its story and because it includes a big enough cast for Ferris performers. The sword-fighting scenes, creature creation "puppets" and other mythical characters made the show more appealing to LaPietra and Aker.

"We also wanted to do a female-focused cast since 'Kinky Boots,' [the fall musical], had mostly male main characters," LaPietra said.

Even though the Ferris Theatre Department has put together productions that involve sword fighting in the past, a little refresher was needed. The last show that involved a stage sword fight was "The Addams Family," a Ferris production from 2014.

In the previous Torch article, "The show will go on," that reported on opening night of "Kinky Boots," secondary education freshman Benji Zorn was interviewed for his reactions in the audience. Zorn quickly became a fan of the theatre department after attending the show. A little while after attending the opening night of "Kinky Boots," Zorn heard about the spring play and decided to audition.

"I saw the tryout form, and I was like, 'What the heck?' I'm not doing too much, so I kind of just hopped on in, and it's been a great experience so far," Zorn said.

Zorn plays the role of the car seen at the beginning of the show. As a shambling mound, which is a bush that gets to attack adventurers, he plays his final role as the middle head of the undefeatable dragon Tiamat.

"When I'm the dragon at the end, I get to let out a big howl," Zorn said. "I feel really lucky to end the show as the last one hit."

The time he has put into this show has only made his excitement about theatre grow. He plans on continuing to be a part of future productions throughout his college years.

Allied health administration senior Abigail Beveridge plays the leading role of Agnes, the older sister who engages in the D&D game in the production.

Beveridge has been a part of theatre since her freshman year when she stumbled across the tabling event that hosted auditions for the production "Nine to Five."

During her years with the Ferris Theatre Department, Beveridge has started to feel like she has a second home. This year she started a tradition with biotechnology junior Kendall Paige, the actress who plays Agnes' deceased sister, Tilly. The two came up with a "break a leg" dance that they do before every rehearsal.

"We were doing it early on in rehearsal as something fun, and then we just happened to do it every day before rehearsal started, and we haven't stopped," Beveridge said.

As they crack jokes about funny costumes during their rehearsals, the cast gets along well and has bonded, according to Beveridge.

This show specially features a heartfelt story shown in a comedic way. However, there are some other reasons for this show to be a sad one. For seniors in the cast, this will be their last show at Ferris. This will also be LaPietra's last show at Ferris, as she is retiring soon.

"We are all very sad but happy, for she's very loved," Beveridge said. "She made this place a very safe place for all of us. She was the one who started the theatre department here at Ferris."



Photo by: Harmony Goodman | Freelance Reporter

Pictured is the cast running through their sword fighting scenes to ensure safely during the show.

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Mr. Pharmacy pageant

Pharmacy students compete for the crown

Kylah Robinson
Culture Reporter

Cheers and applause roared across the hall during the Mr. Pharmacy pageant. The room was filled with around 50 students all chanting different contestants' names, hoping their favorites win the crown.

This was the first year the sisters of Lambda Kappa Sigma hosted the once-annual event since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Graduate students were given a chance to represent their Registered Student Organization and show off their pharmacy knowledge and skills.

Second year pharmacy student Bri Rogers was thrilled to bring the event back and see the contestants laugh and have fun together, regardless of their nerves.

"Regardless of what year they're in, like P1 and P2, they're here competing and hanging out together... and having professors here laugh and watch with us, that's my favorite part," Rogers, who is also the Mr. Pharmacy Chair, said.

The contestants dressed to impress in their button-up shirts, ties and black sashes to show the organization that they were representing.

Contestant and P2 pharmacy graduate student Joey Mason was signed up for this competition by a friend. At first he was nervous and afraid of messing up, but in the end he had a good time getting to know some of his classmates in a different

setting.

"I'm in their class, but I don't talk to them often," Mason said. "But if you could hear it back there, we were laughing and making jokes."

To be the winner, contestants had to play five games based on skills such as pill counting, drug spelling, knowing where to put a needle for vaccinations and getting to know their goals as future pharmacists.

After the games, the three judges, Dr. Kim Hancock, Professor Scott Sexton and Dr. Teresa Bailey, tallied the scores and discussed who should win the crown. This is not Sexton's first time judging this pageant. He always finds the event entertaining and enjoys seeing the students outside of the classroom.

"The big things for me... I always call style points," Sexton said. "Swagger... the accuracy, the skill checks, spelling, it's all got to be on point."

P2 pharmacy graduate student Grace Jipping came to the event to support her friends in the DIP organization and contestant Patrick Maloney. Her most memorable moment of the pageant was one of contestant Phu Ho's responses to a question the host asked him.

"He was asked what his favorite fact is, and he just said, 'I want world peace,' Jipping said. "It was kind of funny."

Three words Jipping would use to describe the event were fun, loud and nerdy. Out of the eight contestants, the winner

of the Mr. Pharmacy pageant was P1 pharmacy graduate student Kameron Stoddard.

If you are interested in learning more about Lambda Kappa Sigma events, you can follow the organization's Instagram

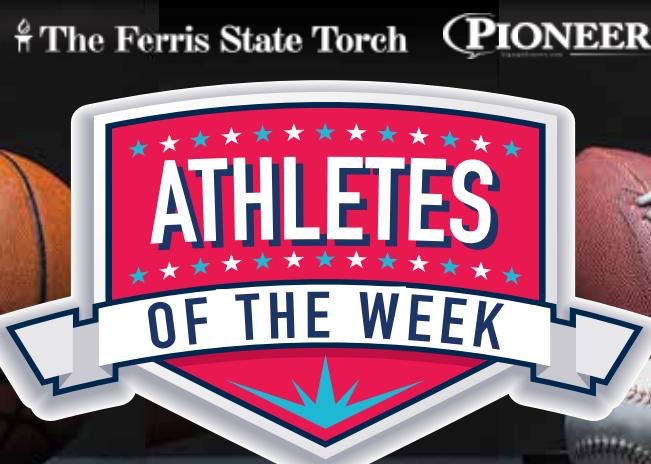
@ferrisstatelks, and if you are interested in learning about the organization or thinking about joining, you can click the link on their Instagram, which will take you to their website.



Photo by: Kylah Robinson | Culture Reporter

Contestants are timed as they have to accurately count pills for their first competition.

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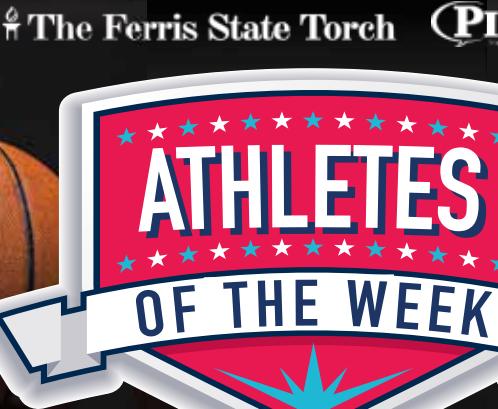
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On the way to becoming five-time national champions

The disc golf team prepares to head to the 2023 College Disc Golf National Championship

Blase Gapinski
Freelance Reporter

The Ferris State disc golf team returns from spring break with only two weeks to go until they depart to compete for the national championship.

The team is getting ready to try and bring home their 5th national title after devoting their spring break to training and coming together as a team. Each year the team takes time off to travel to Marion, North Carolina. This gives the team an opportunity to spend time together and get a look at the courses that they will be competing on.

Disc golf head coach Leonard Johnson takes his team on this trip so there aren't any surprises on the course when nationals come around.

"We had an opportunity to stay pretty close to the courses," Johnson said. "It's a complex in North Carolina called North Cove... They turned a ball golf course into three pretty awesome disc golf courses, and we were able to play all of those courses a couple of times every day to prepare. There's no better experience than to really be familiar with the courses that you will be competing on at the national level."

This trip has become an annual tradition because of how beneficial it is.

"The first time I took a team on a spring break trip was actually in 2015, which was the year that we won our first national championship," Johnson said. "The camaraderie that is developed during that time is unbelievable. From all the time spent in the vans on the way down, to playing disc golf together everyday. Knowing each other, being able to rely on each other and trust each other helps build confidence in one another, and there's no greater feeling than that."

During this trip, Johnson and the other coaches determine what division each member of the team will compete at. This process can be difficult because of the varying skill levels that the team offers.

"It kind of sorts itself out, and a lot of that falls on the team members themselves," Johnson said. "The cream rises to the top, and they know who is going to give us our best chance to win at each of the three different divisions. Some of those decisions are really tough to make because the guys are all so good."

Team captain Derek Franciosi believes it's important for the whole team to try and attend this trip, as it is one of the few times the team gets extended one-on-one time with the coaches.

"I would say it's almost a re-

quirement," Franciosi said. "It is very crucial to practice the course before we compete. It's very rare we play a course blind, and it's often not preferred. It also is one of the only times coaches get to see players perform. I see how the players perform all the time, but in the end it's not my decision who makes the team, it's the coaches, so it's important that everyone gets the chance to be evaluated and compete for a spot."

Even though the team has gotten smaller, Franciosi is looking forward to what this year's team will bring and believes that this gives them an edge that other teams don't have.

"We had close to 30 members last year with 20 being competitive players, and this year we are down to around 23 members with only 15 being competitive," Franciosi said. "Having good chemistry and getting everyone together is super important, and

I think it's one of the reasons we have such a big advantage compared to other schools. When we have a close knit team together, we get to know each other, we know how we play and we can play off of each other super well."

Franciosi described the changes that have been made to the team and what we can expect from the future of Ferris State disc golf.

"I think we're entering a new era for Ferris disc golf," Franciosi said. "Realistically, we only have one or two people graduating from our team, and we have so many new people joining with the addition of two sponsored players joining. We have a lot of freshmen coming in, who I think will play a huge part in the future of disc golf here at Ferris. I really do see a bright future ahead of us."

Benji Zorn, a first-year team member, thinks that a trip like this means he and the rest of his teammates are able to come to-

gether as one. This bonding experience helps them all "get ready for that stress of nationals."

"It's critical for the team to be together like that," Zorn said. "For the most part, it's really difficult for all of us to get together for one practice. We all have class and other things going on, so everyone's not always able to make it to practice. It's really comforting knowing everyone's got each other's back."

Zorn mentioned how the team's chemistry plays a huge role when considering what the tournament's outcome will be.

"The big advantages come during times of struggle," Zorn said. "In team doubles, if we're dropping strokes to the field, it's nice to be able to look each other in the eyes and say we got it. I got you on this shot, you got me and we don't need to worry because, in the end, we are all going to be good. That trust that's able to be built can only be done through a

trip like this."

Although Zorn is one of the newest team members, he believes the team's chemistry will be one of the leading factors that will win them nationals.

"I just want to win so much more for what has happened and to prove that we can do this and we will do it," Zorn said. "Every division has the firepower and camaraderie to do it. We're a group of really fun people, [and] when it comes down to it, we can flip the switch. We have the firepower, we have the game, but we also have that silliness. We have such a connection where we can have a good time, but when we have to click in, we are there."

The team will be leaving for nationals on Saturday, April 1, with their first tournament round beginning on Wednesday, April 5. For team updates, check the Ferris State disc golf Facebook page, and for nationals updates, refer to collegediscgolf.com.

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

Our Location:
Arts and Science Commons 1016
820 Campus Drive
Ferris State University
Big Rapids, MI 49307

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EDITORS COLUMN: *Find your community*

Noah Kolenda
Editor-In-Chief

You may be a bit confused this week, as you're used to seeing a different name attached to this column. Rest assured, it's still me, featuring my new last name. While this has been a process almost four years in the making, I finally can introduce myself to you properly. Hi, I'm Noah Kolenda!

This name change came about because I wanted to bear the name of my mother and her family, the family that raised me. Through this change in my life, I have had the opportunity to reflect a lot about family and how wide that word and its definition can be.

Family isn't defined by biology, by birth certificate, by court document or by someone that

isn't you. Sure, those things can matter in certain circumstances, but none of them automatically make someone family. To me, I've come to learn over the years that family is an earned title for a system of people of your choosing that support you for who you are. You don't owe your time or energy to people who aren't going to give that to you.

In this time of self-discovery, where most of us are out on our own for the first time, the pressure is on. We're experiencing so much life and so many choices all at once that we need a judgment free support system to help us handle this journey and fall back on when we need it. Having this is essential to our growth as people.

The old wives' tale of it taking a village to raise a child doesn't stop the moment you turn 18 or

leave home. It takes a community to get through the human experience. Whatever that looks like for you, find it and hold on to it.

If there's one thing I hope will stick with you from my columns, it's this: you're a hot commodity, and people who don't value you as such don't deserve pieces of you. I'm not saying this to inflate your ego, but to remind you when you need it, or if no one else is telling you this already. You deserve people who are going to be in your corner, win, lose or draw, ready to support you.

Learning when to exit relationships when I'm no longer being treated how I deserve to be treated has improved my life significantly. I've learned not to settle for conditional love just because of relationship length or significance. I've learned that

I'm worth putting in the effort for, and so are you. While you're here building up an educational base, build up your community too.

This university offers many options to connect with new communities, and I encourage you to take advantage of them. Find your community based on your interests, your intersectional identities or jump into something new. You'll never know where you'll pick up a new family member.

This is the next chapter of our lives, and we're evolving. Make sure your relationships are evolving with you and that they're adding value to your life. You deserve a strong support system as you take on the world. Find your village and crush it wherever you land.

Importance of the Anti-Violence Alliance

Marlow Losey
Copy Editor

The Anti-Violence Alliance is a student-run organization tasked with helping students who have struggled with violence on campus and helping others learn how to support those who have been affected by it. The AVA also supports minority students who may face discrimination in a campus setting and helps them deal with this.

Through their physical resources and online presence, the AVA disseminates detailed advice on how to live an emotionally healthy life and how to handle common scenarios such as:

- What to do if someone makes a racist comment about your friend.
- What to do if a co-worker blames a domestic violence survivor.
- What to do if you are feeling stressed and overwhelmed by classwork.
- What a healthy relationship

looks like.

• What consent looks like. A lot of people are told consent simply means that asking is required, "no means no" and that an unconscious person cannot consent. It's more complicated than this, which is where the AVA comes in.

This not only helps individuals notice red flags in their relationships, but it also helps everyone learn how to provide their partner with a healthy romantic or sexual relationship. I believe this is important for everyone to learn how to avoid sexual violence.

Sexual violence can happen to anyone, and knowing these things can prevent the violence before it happens. Knowing what the AVA teaches helps victims of violence know when they are being hurt and why, and it helps people who are interested in romantic or sexual activity to know how to treat their partner correctly.

In these kinds of relationships, I find myself in both a dominant and a submissive position, or a

combination of both, depending on who my partner is. By viewing the AVA's resources as someone who may take on a dominant position, I can learn how to make sure my partner is genuinely consenting and happy, allowing us both to have a healthy experience.

Beforehand, I had a difficult time trusting if a partner communicating their consent was being honest, even when they were conscious, sober and seemed genuinely willing. This held me back from wanting to experience happy romantic and sexual relationships again.

As someone who has experienced others wanting to engage in a sexual relationship with me, knowing what the AVA teaches would have helped me know that my discomfort in some of those situations was normal, and knowing these things would have helped me set boundaries.

During those relationships, I set my boundaries aside and was told that feeling this kind of invasion of my body and feeling dirty afterwards was normal. I

have experienced sexual relationships where consent was not present and relationships where I was guilty of setting my boundaries aside and giving ingenuine consent. Neither of these are fun to deal with.

The AVA's main purpose is to prevent these things from happening in the first place. By looking at their resources, I have received help on how to deal with my past experiences without sharing anything about myself, including my name.

For a long time I found many of these things hard to talk about. I was worried that revealing my identity in the process of looking for help would result in me being told that I'm not a victim, that I'm lying and that someone else's experience was more extreme and more valid than my own.

I am not the only person the AVA has helped in these sorts of situations. The AVA is an important resource for students on campus and deserves to continue to provide people with the information they do.

Play-ins are played out

Why March Madness' most unnecessary games should be done away with

Evan Hibbard
Freelance Photographer

The March Madness tournament is back on this year, exciting fans of college basketball around the country, but the tournament has, of course, begun with a whimper again.

Every year the March Madness tournament pits 68 of the country's best college basketball squads against each other in a series of battles based on skill, momentum and a dash of luck. The tournament technically starts on Tuesday, but the contest's more casual fans don't usually begin watching until Thursday. This is because of the play-in games.

The play-in games are a series of four games played on the Tuesday and Wednesday before all of the main games start on Thursday. Two of the games played are to decide which teams get to enter the tournament as 16-seeds, and the other two games are played to determine which teams get to enter as 11-seeds.

These games are often played between smaller schools looking for a chance to get into the tournament, but every now and then schools from the Power 5 conferences are included as well, and I think this is the biggest problem with the play-ins.

For those unaware, the Power 5 is a group of collegiate athletic conferences containing the Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12, SEC and ACC. I feel like this sort of defeats the purpose of trying to win your conference, or at least finishing close to the top to gain entry into the tournament.

I'm okay with the play-in games for the 16-seeds because, while it pits two tiny schools against each other, these games are still entertaining because the two schools want more than anything to be in the tournament and have a chance at replicating UMBC's miracle win over 1-seed Virginia in 2018.

What I don't enjoy about the play-in games are the games meant to decide the 11-seeds. These are usually schools from Power 5 conferences that didn't win their conference, but still finished well enough during the season and in the conference tournament to secure a spot in the tournament. These games are a lot less entertaining to me because, again, it feels like they defeat the point of trying to win your conference, and these teams take up space for smaller schools that really need a chance to compete.

For example, this year's 16-seed play-in games were SE Missouri St. vs. Texas A&M Corpus Christi and Fairleigh-Dickinson

vs. Texas Southern, while the 11-seed play-ins were Pittsburgh vs. Mississippi State and Nevada vs. Arizona St. The teams in the 16-seed games all won their conference tournaments, which should guarantee them a spot in the tournament, but it doesn't — another problem with the play-ins.

As for the teams in the 11-seed play-ins, none of them won a conference tournament. Pittsburgh didn't even make it to the final four stage of their tournament, as they were trounced by 4-seed Duke 96-69 in a Round of 8 game.

It gets harder and harder to defend the play-in games when you have small schools that won their conference tournaments, desper-

ately fighting for a well-deserved place in March Madness on one side, and borderline mediocre Power 5 teams taking up spots in favor of conference winners.

I'm honestly fine with keeping smaller schools seeded lower than Power 5 and mid-major schools, since they are usually not as skilled, but I think that the NCAA would benefit from getting rid of play-ins, guaranteeing spots to all 32 conference winners and then seeding extra Power 5 and mid-major teams accordingly.

The Division 2 tournament, which Ferris was just unfortunately eliminated from, does this and it still works with 64 teams. Their process is that the 23 conference winners all get an automatic bid to the tournament and the

remaining 41 spots are filled in based on certain criteria, such as win percentage, schedule strength against other DII schools and records vs. ranked teams.

In conclusion, I love March Madness and wouldn't write a piece complaining about one tiny part of it if I didn't care immensely about the tournament. It's always been something I've watched with my dad since I was a little kid, and it holds a special place in my heart because it was something we bonded over, but I do think that the play-in games are unnecessary and should be done away with.

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Sports

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

Men's basketball season concludes

Bulldog season in review

Jeffery Walker
Sports Reporter

The Ferris State Bulldogs' 2022-23 season is over after they advanced to the Midwest Regional Quarterfinals of the NCAA Division II Tournament and lost to the University of Missouri St. Louis.

They entered the tournament on a loss after dropping the final regular season game to their rival, Grand Valley State University, and missed the opportunity to clinch a share of the GLIAC regular season championship.



Entering the GLIAC tournament, the Bulldogs were the 2-seed, behind the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

After falling short in the GLIAC tournament to Northern Michigan University 67-59 in the semifinals, the team found out they made the NCAA Division II tournament as the 6-seed in the Midwest.

In the tournament, the Bulldogs met #3 Ashland University in the quarterfinals where the Bulldogs pulled off the upset win 71-70 to advance.

In the quarterfinal game

against the #2 University of Missouri St. Louis, the Bulldogs led by two at the half but fell 82-68, ending the Bulldog's season.

The Bulldogs finished the season with a 24-9 overall record and 13-5 in GLIAC conference play.

In 33 games the Bulldogs averaged 84.8 points per game, shooting 48.5% from the field, 38.3% from three-point range and 76.1% from the free throw line.

As a team, they averaged 41.2 rebounds per game with 11.5 of those rebounds coming on the offensive side. The Bulldogs also averaged 19.6 assists per game.

The Bulldogs averaged 30.2 field goals made per game, 8.1 three-point field goals made per game and made 16.2 free throws per game.

Defensively, the Bulldogs averaged seven steals per game and four blocks per game.

The Bulldogs allowed 70.9 points per game, holding their opponents to 41.2% shooting from the field and 32.7% from the three-point range.

At home this season the Bulldogs took advantage of playing on their court surrounded by their fans, as they posted a 16-2 record.

On the road, the Bulldogs went 6-5 on the season.

The Bulldogs had three players average double digits in scoring.

Leading the Bulldogs this season in scoring was Solomon Oraegbu. He averaged 18.2 points per game this season, appeared in 32 games and started in 30. He shot 51.3% from the field and 41.7% from three-point range.

Ben Davidson also appeared and started in all 33 games this season, averaging 13 points per game on 48.1% from the field and 42.7% from the three-point range.

Ethan Erickson appeared in 30 games for the Bulldogs off the bench, averaging 11.7 points on 46.7% from the field and 47.3% from three-point range.

Amari Lee averaged 4.8 assists per game in 33 games off the bench to lead the Bulldogs. Jimmy Scholler averaged 3.5 assists per game and Ben Davidson averaged 2.6 assists per game.



Photo by: Mariana Searl | Torch Photographer

Dolapo Olayinka dunks during Ferris' 85-58 victory over Wayne State Feb. 9. Olayinka averaged 9.4 points per game this season.

Leading the Bulldogs in rebounds was Mykel Bingham with 6.2 rebounds in 33 games and starting in 19. Dolapo Olayinka averaged 5.9 rebounds in 23 games and started in 19. Reece Hazelton averaged 4.8 rebounds in 33 games and started in three.

The Bulldogs fell short of a championship this season in

both the regular season and postseason play.

Next year the Bulldogs will be looking to win the championships that eluded them this season, as they will have a majority of the team returning. They will be more experienced and will be eyeing a later push into March.

SCORECARD

Softball

March 16 - Ferris 12, Tiffin 9
(Game 1)
March 16 - Tiffin 4, Ferris 3
(Game 2)

Men's tennis

March 10 - Ferris 5, Palm Beach Atl. 2
March 18 - Ferris 5, Grace 2

Women's tennis

March 8 - Rollins 5, Ferris 2
March 10 - Palm Beach Atl. 4, Ferris 3

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Momentum growing for softball

Bulldogs feeling confident ahead of GLIAC play

Brandon Wirth
Sports Reporter

It's been a rollercoaster season so far for Ferris softball.

After starting the season 3-10 through their first 13 contests, the Bulldogs won six of their next eight games during the Spring Games in Florida. Despite falling in their last four road contests, Ferris has found a sense of confidence going into conferences beginning on Saturday.

"I think our girls are confident," head coach Jake Schumann said. "I've had some coaches from other sports tell us that our... girls are walking around campus with a little more swag, and that's an improvement."

The Bulldogs split their most recent doubleheader against Tiffin last Thursday with a 12-9 win and a 4-3 loss in Ohio. The Bulldogs spurred out a combined 24 hits against the Dragons, their largest combination in back-to-back games all season.

Ferris also fought in a tough battle at Lewis the day before, losing 7-3 and 3-2 against the Flyers last Wednesday.

"We went over to Lewis and [played] pretty tough," Schumann said. "I think they're probably a

top-eight team in our region. We had game 2-1 with two outs and didn't quite get to a fly ball that would've ended the game."

Schumann's squad enters the GLIAC schedule with a 10-16 record, a one-win improvement from the same point a year ago. The Bulldogs have also played six teams that finished in the top ten of their respective regional polls last season, including defeating Northwood and West Virginia Wesleyan.

Entering the season, Ferris was ranked sixth in the pre-season conference polls, the same position they finished in the 2022 season. According to senior shortstop Amara Zukowski, that early season ranking has motivated the team in a major way.

"It's definitely motivating," Zukowski said. "I think that we have so much talent and have a lot of potential to change everybody's minds."

One of the ways Ferris has begun to make some noise is on the base paths. The Bulldogs currently lead the GLIAC in stolen bases at the halfway point with 60, which is already 11 more than Ferris collected all last year. Junior Big Rapids native Josie Prince leads the team with nine

stolen bags, and freshmen Jadyn Joseph follows with eight.

This new aggressive style the Bulldogs have adapted comes from a new type of philosophy adopted by the players from Schumann.

"He's implementing the 'we want it, gotta take it' mentality," Zukowski said. "The instruction has been very good, and we're meshing really well together."

Ferris has also made strides on the mound, lowering their earned run average by over 1.6 runs per contest compared to last season. Junior Aryn Gallacher currently paces the Bulldog pitchers with a team high of five wins and a 2.75 E.R.A. while freshmen Catherine O'Donohue leads the team with 43 strikeouts.

The Bulldogs will play on their home turf for the first time this season on Wednesday against former GLIAC foe Northwood at 2 and 4 p.m. Ferris defeated the Timberwolves in Florida 7-2 back on March 6, avenging their 13-2 loss earlier this season on Feb. 18 in Tennessee.

With mother nature wreaking havoc with the snow, Schumann is hoping they'll be able to play on the field they've only been able to practice on once this year.



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics.

Kacey Bouche makes a defensive play during Ferris' 12-9 victory over Tiffin.

and I want to keep them on our schedule."

"The couple inches of snow we got in the last 24 hours is depressing," Schumann said. "There's also an 86 percent chance for rain on Wednesday, but we're hoping we'll be able to get out there. If not, we'll push it back a week and we'll try to play them. They're a good squad,

Following, Ferris begins their 24-game conference schedule on Saturday at Saginaw Valley. Their first home conference double header will take place on Sunday, April 2, where the Bulldogs host the Panthers of Davenport.

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