

## Biggest event since COVID

Demand doubles for SGA's volunteer event



Photo by: Jonathen Hart | News Reporter

With cars lined up around Lot 5E, SGA member Seth Brott unloaded students' rakes and leaf bags for the Big Event.

**Jonathen Hart**  
News Reporter

The 2023 Big Event saw over 200 houses sign up for volunteer lawn care, twice as many as an average year.

The Student Government Association's annual Big Event is a chance for students to connect with Big Rapids residents through volunteer yardwork assistance.

Starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, students poured into the rainy IRC parking lot to give back to the community with their fellow sorority, fraternity or student organization members.

Jana Hurley, an advisor for the SGA and the Interim Dean of Student Life, shed some light on how the Big Event works as a community-building tradition.

"The purpose is that colleges and universities exist within the context of a larger community," Hurley said. "When they're functioning at their best, they're having a positive impact on the community."

Along with SGA members, Hurley arrived at the Big Event at 8 a.m. on Saturday. She believes the event reflects how much effort students are willing to dedicate to philanthropy.

"This is the kind of effort that allows students both to actually give back [and] also to engage in the planning and implementation aspects of it, which is in and of itself a learning experience," Hurley

said. "And you know, every time you do something this big, some things go well, some things don't go as well. You learn from that, and you move on and do it better next time."

With high demand from the community, the SGA had a difficult time recruiting enough student volunteers.

It was up to the SGA's advisors and executive board members to maintain communication between with the residents who signed up for lawncare assistance.

Like many other SGA members, this was President-Elect Dylan Andrews' first time working the Big Event. With over ten volunteer groups failing to show up on Saturday, Andrews interacted with a few dissatisfied community members.

"We've had a few locals and faculty members come in to complain about our process," Andrews said. "It was kind of like harassment, to be honest, from the faculty. It was just not appropriate... to come and ridicule and completely try to dismantle our operation."

Andrews also spoke on some of the hardships they faced during the event, including backlash from residents.

"This year was tough because we had some unfortunate circumstances," Andrews said. "I will promise this, this event is going to be better next year. All of the people will be reached out [to]. If anything, I'm thinking of potentially completely doing a whole different

event in total that'll still help out the community as big as we're doing now," Andrews said.

To make up for the no-show volunteers, many students returned to Lot 5E to pick up a second round of leaf bags and work on additional houses.

Andrews appreciated seeing students take extra time out of their weekend to carry on a 15-year-old Ferris tradition.

"It warms my heart for me to do this for my first year," Andrews said. "It's great to see. We've had our discrepancies, and there have been problems, but the majority of the people still [did] go out and are doing the work. There are some phone calls that I've had for individuals that are beyond grateful."

Though appreciative of the students' help, some Big Rapids residents felt let down by the poor communication between themselves and the SGA. Michelle Peterson would like to see a change in the future organization of the Big Event.

"I had signed my parents up as I have done in the past and was told [the SGA] would reach out through e-mail," Peterson said. "As time went on, I received nothing... This is a great service by the students, but I was disappointed in the lack of communication this year."

Many Big Rapids residents were pleased with the results of their yards and shared their excitement for the help they had received on Facebook.

Elementary education freshman Harmony Lionberger went out and did two houses with her group.

"I loved being able to go out and connect with the community because I'm new to this area, and it was nice to feel connected to the people that aren't just here for college," Lionberger said.

SGA member Seth Brott assisted volunteers with their lawncare tools.

"It feels great to give back to the community because they gave so much to me," Brott said. "I've been in the area for a very long time. Big Rapids has... helped me, so I'm trying to give back."

Finance senior Joseph Hall runs Sigma Alpha Epsilon's philanthro-

py. Throughout his time at Ferris, he struggled to find volunteer events for his SAE brothers to participate in. Because of this, he appreciated how involved the SGA was in the planning and execution on this year's Big Event.

"It's kind of nice having something already organized that we can help out with," Hall said.

As Andrews ascends to the SGA presidency, he has big plans for one of Ferris' biggest traditions. His goal is to run the 2024 Big Event with a group of students that are as "effective and efficient as possible."



Photo courtesy of Jennifer O'Connor

Jared Wallace (left) and Samara Tyus (right) tidy-up Big Rapids residents' lawns.



# News

Jessica Oakes | News Editor | oakesj3@ferris.edu

## Contract Q&A

Associate provost and FFA president speak on “fruitful” contract discussions

Jessica Oakes, News Editor

### ASSOCIATE PROVOST STEVE REIFERT:

#### What progress has been made in contract discussions this semester?

“I can’t get into specifics — what we’ve agreed to, what we’ve not — but it’s been very fruitful from my perspective in terms of our engaging and good conversations. We have come to an agreement, changing, modifying and adjusting our procedure and contract language. We still are going through some things and really it’s been mutual agreement on everything.”

#### How close do you believe the FFA and the university are to finalizing a new contract?

“One of the intent[s] of our discussions is to keep the economics out. What I mean by that is any future raises, cost of medical benefits, all those type of things. So, we still have quite a ways to go. We probably won’t get into that until well into May.”

“We still have some really intense months. The end of this month, May and June for sure. But I do like the atmosphere, attitude and direction that we’re going.”

#### How long have you participated in contract discussions/how many rounds of contract discussions have you been present for?

“Well, I was part of the bargaining team on the last contract discussions... I’ve been involved in this in a roundabout way for several years. So, I was [on the] negotiating team the last time we signed a contract. My official role as Associate Provost has been for the last year.”

#### Who else is present at these discussions?

“Fredricka Hayes is our HR director. Then we have Michael Garrity, who’s our labor relations person. And then Logan Jones represents the College of Business. He’s the Dean of College of Business.”

#### How have this semester’s discussions compared to 2018’s?

“We didn’t even start until June [2018], right? So, the contract was almost expired, and we didn’t finish everything up till November. So, we’re way ahead right now.”

“One of the main differences is generally when it gets contentious, the parties bring out attorneys that specifically deal with labor relations issues. Right now, it’s just a group of us talking and discussing the language. The labor relations attorneys that both sides contract with are not present. We’re trying to do as much as we can to avoid the contentious issues.”

#### Do you feel like you’re setting a new precedent for future contract discussions?

“I hope this is the way we go. We need to talk earlier, right? And we can’t wait until the month it expires and expect something to happen. So, this open dialogue that we have in these discussions is good.”

#### What is the goal for this year’s new contract?

“I’d like to settle the contract before it expires. That’s my goal. I would rather not have it expire at the end of June and then have some sort of struggle as we get through July [and] August. We need to focus on the other bills for the university.”

### FFA PRESIDENT CHARLES BACON:

#### What progress has been made in contract discussions this semester?

“I would characterize it as a lot of progress. We’ve made some modifications to the tenure and promotion process and to the letter of agreement on the academic advisors. We have eliminated an entire appendix on course development agreements and intellectual property, Appendix B and C. For the first time ever, faculty will be compensated for doing independent study courses.”

“We don’t have any final language on stuff. Let’s get a final language.”

#### How close do you believe the FFA and the university are to finalizing a new contract?

“I had wanted to hold off on the financial stuff. Tonight [the FFA] have a general membership meeting. I didn’t want that to become the issue. Going forward from here, each team will be looking at the financial issues. Salary benefits, health insurance, supplemental market adjustment, dollar amounts that go with promotion from assistant to associate, things like that.”

#### How long have you participated in contract discussions/how many rounds of contract discussions have you been present for?

Three.

#### Who else is present at these discussions?

“John Caserta. And, currently, Jenice Winowiecki is present as well, and Brandy Vanderhovel is our UniServ director.”

#### How have this semester’s discussions compared to 2018’s?

“Oh, good heavens. The previous contract was dominated by an outside attorney that Eisler had brought in for 20 years.”

“We had meetings throughout the summer of 2018. And then when they fell apart, a week before class, that was the last time we met until mediation. In mediation, we brought in an outside mediator who went between rooms during the meetings we had during the fall. So, much, much different.”

“I asked the president in August, [the] first time when I sat down with him, ‘Can we do this differently? Can we do what we’re doing right now? Would you have an objection to that?’ And he said no. My words were, ‘Let’s keep the attorneys out of the room.’ That way, everyone in the room is vested in Ferris.”

#### Do you feel like you’re setting a new precedent for future contract discussions?

“Depends how it ends up, doesn’t it? But I’d like to think so. We have to plan for the worst and hope for the best.”

#### What is the goal for this year’s new contract?

“There’s so many pieces. I couldn’t isolate on one piece. Faculty just want to be respected.”

“I don’t want to make it sound like all we’re interested in is money. It’s not. We’re interested in Ferris succeeding and growing and whatnot. You don’t do that without having faculty committed to the institution.”

“For the last 20 years with Eisler, we were just not respected. We weren’t part of the decision making, we were simply an expense and basically a bother, right. President [Bill] Pink is much more of a person I believe who wants all stakeholders to feel good about the institution.”

## MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

### Ember St. Amour News Reporter

A former Flint Township clerk was sentenced with six months of house arrest on April 24.

Kathy Funk plead not-guilty to breaking an election box seal in 2020. Pleading no-contest can, and was, still used in sentencing.

The Detroit News reported that Funk won the fall 2020 election by 79 votes. Funk first told Michigan State Police

that a suspect had broken into the township hall and damaged the election box. An investigation revealed that Funk was the one who had tampered with the box. This resulted in the inability for the township to conduct a recount.

Funk quit her clerk position in 2021 to work as the Genessee County elections supervisor. Due to her criminal charges, she was placed on administrative leave before resigning from the position entirely.

## GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

### Noah Kolenda Editor in Chief

The US Supreme Court decided on Saturday, April 22 to overrule an injunction placed upon the widely accessed abortion drug mifepristone. This decision means mifepristone remain legally accessible even after the April 7 ruling from U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk of Texas that was set to block it nationwide according to Reuters.

Approved in 2000 by the FDA, mifepristone will be the topic of debate in front of the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans on May 17. Challengers claim that the drug was illegally approved alongside the removal of safeguards that

were designed to defend against the doling out of dangerous drugs.

The FDA has called it safe and effective as demonstrated over decades of use by millions of Americans, with rare adverse effects according to Reuters.





# Broadcast engineering comes to Ferris this fall

## Ferris alumnus organizes new television and digital media production minor



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Multimedia Editor

New students for broadcast engineering will begin their learning in the new Center for Virtual Learning building.

**Nolan Harris**  
News Reporter

Ferris Television Engineer Bill Jung turned his master's capstone project into a full fledged broadcasting minor, which is set to begin in the upcoming fall semester.

In this context, an engineer is the person who sets up the equipment for distributing television and radio broadcasts, and they maintain it and troubleshoot when things go wrong.

After identifying a need for broadcasting within the television industry, Jung developed a solution with School of Digital Media Director Glen Okonoski to create a minor in broadcast engineering.

Jung was first given the idea at a Michigan Association of Broadcasters event when a woman misunderstood his engineer title and mistook him for a professor of engineering. When Jung corrected her, she replied, "Well you should be. We are in desperate need of engineers."

The MAB is an advocacy group for local television and radio studios. They represent around 3500 employees across the state and have identified a transition within broadcasting media. The traditional workforce is aging out and looking towards retirement. This creates greater demand for younger engineers to fill these newly opened roles. This demand is in turn requiring more education for high level jobs.

"We have identified a need for broadcast engineers in [Michigan]," MAB President and CEO Sam Klemet said. "We are looking to get a new pipeline of engineers, and we have been working with Ferris to bring those that are in the broadcast engineering industry to talk to students and provide sample curriculums."

Broadcast engineers previously worked as electrical engineers and computer science engineers. Very few colleges and universities

in the United States offer a degree in broadcast engineering, and only a handful offer a minor with this focus.

The Ferris broadcast engineering minor has been created out of already existing classes. These include television and digital media classes, computer science classes and more. The goal is to create a universally accessible, well rounded program with hands-on experience not found anywhere else in the country.

"Ferris has a very strong reputation," Klemet said. "We have graduates in Michigan at our broadcast stations [and] all over the country as well in various rolls. Whether it's production or on air... having a degree from there does carry a lot of weight."

An additional goal is to increase enrollment in higher level technology classes and broaden their scope to outside their individual majors.

"I'm mad that Ferris didn't offer this program when I first enrolled," digital animation and game design junior Kieran Chichester said. "Esports needs broadcasters too, and I would have loved to use the minor as a way to become a part of these productions."

Television and digital media production freshman Andres Hyde expressed interest in learning to be an engineer. He sees the broadcast engineering minor as an opportunity to delve deeper into the engineering side of digital media, which his traditional major track would not have offered.

"If you enjoy a variety in your work, have a natural curiosity and like looking at new things, this would be the ideal [minor] for you," Jung said. "There is something different everyday, and everybody has a boss, but in a lot of ways you make your own schedule, your own agenda."

Klemet believes that this program will set Ferris students up for successful and enjoyable careers.

"Broadcast engineers are critically important for safety reasons, security reasons and technical reasons, but it's also a lot of fun," Klemet said. "You do cool things

and go to cool places, whether it's sporting events, concerts or community events. It's a fun job... that can have a very rewarding and lucrative life."

With the minor set to launch in the fall, new engineers will be taught in the new Center for Visual Learning in the coming months.

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

## RECEIVE UP TO \$2,000

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

Applicant must be the child, sibling, grandchild, son or daughter of a Ferris alumna(us), have a 2.75 GPA and successfully completed a minimum of 24 earned credit hours at Ferris State University.

Please note the following: Students seeking an associate degree must have completed 24 credit hours at the end of spring semester and students seeking a bachelor's degree must have completed 56 credit hours at the end of spring semester. In addition, students must submit an application including an essay describing their personal career goals and role an FSU degree will play in achieving those goals, a letter from the FSU alumna(us) describing the effect their FSU career had on their professional career, and a recommendation by an FSU staff or faculty member.

## DEADLINE IS MAY 12, 2023

\*All submissions must be made on line using MyScholarships.  
**FERRIS.EDU/MYS**

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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# Nursing for the future

## Nursing students share their research for future change

**Meghan Hartley**  
News Reporter

On April 19, the College of Nursing hosted its ninth annual Celebration of Success for fourth and fifth semester nursing students in the David L. Eisler Center, celebrating the end of research, the end of studying and the beginning of a medical journey.

The celebration was a time for students to share the research they have done over the semester with poster presentations.

Fifth semester nursing students showcased their capstone projects, which ranged from perinatal bereavement to child abuse, while fourth semester nursing students showcased their academic service learning projects, which ranged from food banks to children's camps.

According to Associate Professor Susan Owens, capstone projects are completed by students in their last semester on a topic of their choice. They have to investigate the concept, which will influence their practice, and become close to experts on the subject.

"In practice, they will be presenting [this information] to physicians and other health care providers," Owens said. "It's a great communication tool so that they can be

successful in their practice."

Owens says if students decide to go to graduate school, they will have original research they can present alongside their resume and academic portfolio. While capstone projects are the last thing students must complete before graduating, academic service learning projects serve as community service with a healthcare twist.

"This gives them practice, and generally it's in a community setting, and they are doing something for the population that they decide to do," Owens said. "There are a lot of examples in there, but I helped with the wellness clinic at the College of Optometry that takes care of patients with diabetes."

Owens says some students also choose to work with food pantries to see how much nutrition individuals are getting when they receive goods there. Associate Professor Jeremy Brooks says the projects that fourth semester nursing students do is significant to their education, as it helps them see what healthcare opportunities are out there.

"What kind of healthcare is out there? Or how does service really impact people's care?" Brooks said. "A lot of places they complete service learning at are actually

health-related... It's really about service because part of nursing is service for your life, and so looking at how they can implement that early on in their career... and then continue on throughout life."

Fourth semester nursing students Connor Haley and Jesse Rivera volunteered at Camp Henry for kids ages five to 17 in Newaygo, Michigan over the summer. They conducted lice checks and COVID-19 tests and made sure each kid had all their medications for the week they would be staying.

"The biggest thing [I learned] throughout the project is just different ways nurses can help," Rivera said. "It's not just about providing medication or administering medication. A lot of the kids sometimes just want somebody to talk to; you don't know what kind of homes they come from. Sometimes they just need a listening ear, and I think it was nice to be able to do that and be that."

Haley said learning to work and communicate with kids of all ages and developmental stages prepared them for a future in pediatrics.

"If we're going to be working in pediatrics, people aged five to 17, you're gonna see them a lot in the hospitals or doctor offices," Rivera said. "I think being able to com-

municate and understand [the] different backgrounds of different children is sometimes more than medication, sometimes they just need somebody to talk to them."

Throughout the event, Haley and Rivera were able to speak with fifth year nursing students about their capstone projects and gain inspiration for their upcoming projects.

"I really want to look into child abuse cases and ways that we can change that," Haley said. "My mom worked for Child Protective Services, and it's something that really touched me in our working with kids. It's such a big issue in our society."

Fifth semester nursing student Madison Pruett shared her poster presentation on educating students from pre-school through high school on child abuse and what signs they should look for.

Pruett says child abuse is prevalent and children often can't decipher whether they are being abused or not. Through her research study, she proposed that schools should incorporate educational sessions varying in information depending on the age group to help teach them about the topic.

"During my clinical experience, I actually had a child come in that was a case of child abuse,"

Pruett said. "It really hurt me and affected me. So then I wanted to research more on that."

Pruett says the child had been left freezing in his mother's car and didn't realize that what his mother put him through was a form of abuse.

"I think it's important [to share this information] because child abuse is very prevalent, and a lot of people don't realize how prevalent it is," Pruett said. "Getting this information out and having all these people further out education to others is very important."

Brooks says that he taught both fourth and fifth semester nursing students this past semester and says it has been good seeing them all wrap up their work, come to the event prepared to share their research and be excited to share the information they plan to implement in their future work as nurses.

For nursing students graduating this spring, this event was their last chance to present their own findings before applying it to their own work in the medical field.

# Differing finals

## How finals week can change depending on the person

**Ember St. Amour**  
News Reporter

Everyone at Ferris know finals week is coming up, but how different does this look for each student?

Some students don't have any exams, while others have up to five or six. As exam week approaches, this varies from student to student depending on their year, major and whether they are an undergraduate or graduate student.

### Undergraduate students

Students studying for a degree in an undergraduate program have a combination of both general education credits, as well as major specific credits that they need to take classes for. This can lead students to a mix of different types of exams during finals week.

Accounting freshman Ben Edds is a part of the College of Business. Edds is currently taking general education courses in addition to several courses specific to his major.

"[Microsystem software and statistics classes are] open ended classes, so I can take the final exam early if I want to," Edds said. "My third class I have is commu-

nications, and that's just a final speech that we give. It's pretty much just open ended for me."

Edds explained that he thinks having finals during finals week will become more common as he takes more major specific classes.

Automotive engineering technician sophomore Kameron Moore explained that he may not have to take one of his final exams.

"[The Automotive Service Excellence certifications] could be a substitute for our final," Moore said. "Any students that feel like they are ready to take that test would end up taking the test, and if they pass the test, they don't have to take the final."

Medical laboratory science junior Jenna Murphy is a part of the College of Health Professions. She explained how her exam schedule is different than most.

"Our exam schedule didn't come out until like three days ago," Murphy said. "I have two exams each day of the week, so Monday through Thursday. They're all cumulative."

Murphy also discussed how her lab exams are individual exams. Meaning, each student gets their own patient with symptoms that are different from their classmates, and they have to correctly



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Freelance Reporter

identify their patient's issue.

### Graduate students

Students taking classes in a graduate program have classes that are specific to their major. Due to this, the exams that they take are more direct to their field of study.

P1 Dayna Gesinski, a first-year student at the College of Pharmacy, weighed in on how her exams are different from undergraduate exams.

"We have a lot more exams," Gesinski said. "We had an [objective structured clinical examination], which is like a patient care exam. We have to do different things like counsel in a new medication or take blood pressure [or

take a medication history from patients. And we have a cumulative exam on different calculations for calculating dosing of medications as well as our final, so it's more exams."

Gesinski added that her classes require a lot of studying, as the exams are cumulative and have a lot of information that needs to be memorized.

P2 Hunter DeWitt also has final exams that are different from most students.

"We have essentially two classes right now that everyone has one of them. We don't have a final, we just have two exams and we're doing assignments and projects the last few weeks," DeWitt said. "Then the other class we have, they run in five-week courses, and

then we start a new one. So we have final exams every five weeks, really."

DeWitt explained that most of her finals are practical exams that are simulations of what they would be doing on the field.

Because finals differ depending on one's year and major, students may find themselves in a spot where they are studying more than their fellow classmates or friends. They may also find themselves having a varying period of time they have to stay for classes. However, the final exams students take help them get closer to obtaining their degree.

# Opinions

Dylan Rider | Opinions Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

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## EDITORS COLUMN:

# It's about the friends you make along the way

**Noah Kolenda**  
*Editor-In-Chief*

In my tenure at the Ferris State Torch, I've written 86 articles, held five positions, worked on 84 editions overall and oversaw 30 editions as editor-in-chief, but most importantly, I've made friendships that will last a lifetime.

I have had the opportunity to report on countless matters of the utmost importance from campus issues and elections, to emerging technology and incidents that gained international attention. I have gained valuable experiences while working alongside peers that push me to be my best. They also taught me so much that I could have never picked up in a

classroom.

I gained my tenacity and persistence from watching my first editor-in-chief man the phones trying to get comments and quotes, and when that didn't work, go and patiently wait outside of offices just to get the two words that speak volumes, "no comment." She showed me the thrill of digging deeper into a story. I will forever cherish the memory of working on a story until sunrise to make sure it made it to print. I have never been so exhausted yet purely awake.

I gained flexibility and quick-thinking skills from a news reporter and opinions editor who never quit. She always took dead ends or bad leads in stride and was ready to adapt at a

moment's notice. She taught me to examine stories through as many lenses as possible to ensure that I was telling my story equitably. She always had a plan or was ten steps ahead in making a new one. I can't wait to work with her again soon.

Finally, I gained my boldness and creativity from the lifestyle's editor turned multimedia editor who was never afraid to take risks and try new things. She helped me break out of my shell and become more confident as a reporter and leader. Without her, I'd likely still be cowering in the corner when doing man on the street reporting. I'll always be in awe of her fearlessness.

I could go on and on

about the lasting connections I made here with people that have taught me so much, but I'll spare you. What I will say is that I'll remember each and every one of them all throughout my career. While at the end of the day this journey is measured by how well we do by ourselves, we're never really doing it alone. We're learning from each other, leaning on each other and helping each other through it.

While in a few short weeks I'll be off reporting in the nation's capital and in a few short months perfecting my craft in graduate school in New York City, I know one thing is for certain. Even when I'm seven or eight hundred miles from here, or even

more miles from those already into their journeys, I'm one call, FaceTime or text message away from people that will always be in my corner.

I started to perfect my trade here, grew up here and found myself here, but most importantly, I made lifelong friends here. This program has given me so much. I leave with an education, yes, but I also leave with a gaggle of confidants, inspirations, sounding boards, editors and, most importantly, friends. It's been a pleasure, and although I have a healthy amount of fear about what's ahead, I know my people will be there for me no matter what happens.

# Oversexualization of bisexuality

## Let's open up the conversation

**Anonymous Reporter**

Every identifying bisexual eventually faces the dreaded three person question. If the person you're speaking with is bold enough, you might even get a, "Can I watch?"

Imagine this: You recently started dating a new partner, and the conversation on sexual orientation comes up. You tell them that you are bisexual. Immediately, they start poking around on your comfortability with a three person sexual activity.

They tell you it's okay if you want to kiss girls if they can watch. If that's your cup of tea by all means, but these kinds of interactions always leave me

bewildered.

Bisexual women have long been subjected to societal stereotypes that characterize them as hypersexual beings. We can see this in various forms of media, from the music industry to television and film. Women are often objectified and sexualized in the media for the pleasure of heterosexual men.

This can be seen in movies and television shows that depict bisexual women engaging in sexual acts with other women solely for the male viewer's pleasure. This portrayal reduces bisexuality to a fetish and reinforces the idea that bisexual women exist solely for male sexual gratification.

People who identify

as bisexual are generally seen as being bi-curious or confused. People think when you are bisexual you are either gay or straight with an unstable sexual orientation, but this is not the case.

You can be bisexual and like men and women with a split 50-50, or 60-40, maybe even 70-30. The idea around bisexuality is that you are attracted to both genders.

You could be bisexual with a preference, and there's still a large possibility you will be sexualized. Reducing bisexuality to a fetish devalues people's sexuality and puts them in a box. Being told you're just curious because you have a boyfriend is very demeaning.

Ideas like this could be dangerous to bisexuals. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence study, 61% of bisexual women reported experiences of rape, stalking and or physical violence throughout their lives.

These ideas that sexualize bisexuals could potentially put them at risk for increased sexual violence.

I think a lot of identifying bisexuals feel excluded from the LGBT+ community because we can be very straight passing. It's easy to feel left out when you don't necessarily look the part.

Nonetheless, there's no lack of acceptance and love within the LGBT+ community, but I think this exclusion plays a role in

the discussion not being as open as it should.

Ultimately, the oversexualization of bisexuals is a problem and needs to be talked about more. Opening up the conversation about the realities of being over sexualized is a huge step.

Speak up when you're uncomfortable, and don't play into a fetish you're not into. Know your boundaries, and never let yourself be put in a box.

You are the only person that walks in your shoes everyday. Be proud about your sexuality, and communicate to people when they make objective comments.



# Media continues to underrepresent female athletes

## Torch improves upon national trends but still falls short

**Brody Keiser**  
Sports Editor

When Ferris football defeated Grand Valley to advance to their fourth consecutive NCAA DII semifinal, the Torch published the story recap on the front page of the newspaper. When Ferris soccer made their first NCAA DII semifinal appearance in program history, the Torch published the story recap on the front page of the sports section.

Those two stories were released in the same week. As an editor, story arrangement is a weekly challenge. In this case, it was an impossible decision. But at the end of the day, the truth is that female athletes and female sports continue to be underrepresented in media across the United States.

### A CONCERNING TREND

A lack of female athlete representation in media has been an issue of significant importance for years in the sports world. Females play many of the same sports men do and often compete at the same time as men, yet female athletes receive far less viewership and news attention than their male counterparts.

Recently, women's sports have seen a rise in viewership, but studies done by Purdue University and CNBC found that females receive roughly the same media coverage that they did in the 1980's.

This year, the women's DI basketball championship recorded 9.9 million viewers, the most of all time. The men's championship this year had 14.69 million viewers, an all-time low.

Superstar players like Iowa's Caitlin Clark and LSU's Angel Reese drove the storylines for women's basketball, helping set the stage for one of the most anticipated championships in college basketball history.

Female sports have seen an increase in viewership, culminating recently in the most viewed college basketball championship game in women's history. Female athlete superstars drive promotion and advertising. Yet female athletes remain underrepresented and underappreciated in national media.

Ferris soccer player Isabella Sabo believes that if the same effort were put into the promotion of women's sports, fans would enjoy female sports more.

"There's not much coverage of the women, and if you turn on an ESPN broadcast, they're usually talking about male sports," Sabo said. "There's not going to be much coverage of women's sports."

Research from one of the Purdue studies found that only 5.4% of all airtime on ESPN was related to females. Research from Alyssa

Burt published in Culture, Society and Praxis showed that women are featured in only 4.9% of Sports Illustrated content.

Ferris basketball player Mallory McCartney echoed some of the same thoughts, calling for better marketing of female sports.

"I think that women's sports are starting to get what they've deserved," McCartney said. "On the other hand of that, I still think there can be a lot better advertisement for [them]... I feel like people kind of brush it off that it's not fun to watch, but I don't know if anyone has truly sat down and watched it."

### FEMALE ATHLETES IN THE TORCH

Nationally, female sports continue to be underrepresented. Does the Torch follow this same trend? To answer this question, I looked back at five years (2018-2022) of Torch editions and randomly sampled ten editions of the 128 total editions produced in the months of September, October, November, December, January, February, March and April (the Torch's main production months) from the selected years.

In the ten editions sampled, there were 43 total stories that appeared in the sports section. Of those 43 stories, 15 (~35%) of them were about female athletes or sports. Four of the 15 stories combined male and female sports (a story was about men's and women's cross country, for example), meaning that only 11 (~26%) of the stories were about female athletes or sports alone.

Of the ten editions sampled, only three had female stories on the front page of the sports section. One of the ten editions sampled had no female sports content, however, all ten of the editions had content related to male sports.

In comparison to the data found during Purdue's study that ESPN dedicates 5.4% of its airtime to female sports and by Burt that females are only featured in 4.9% of Sports Illustrated content, it appears that the Torch provides significantly more coverage for female athletes. There is an equal number of male and female sports at Ferris, but 65% of the coverage that made it into print during this sample went to male sports.

McCartney and Sabo both feel the Torch does well representing female sports.

"I think the Torch has done an amazing job," McCartney said. "That's why it's so hard for me sometimes to sit here and say that females deserve more, because we do, but for me personally, from my own experience, the Torch has always reached

out to me, and every article I've read has always had both men's and women's sides of it."

Sabo agreed that the Torch has done a good job covering her soccer team but acknowledged that increased coverage often comes with success on the field. Bulldog soccer made it to the Final Four in Seattle during the 2022 season.

"When we won the GLIAC, one of my friends picked up a newspaper and brought it over to my house and framed it for me, and that was pretty cool," Sabo said. "I also saw when we won our first game of the NCAA tournament, [the Torch] wrote about that. I scored the game-winning penalty kick, and my roommate brought a stack of papers home for me. That was really cool because I got to give them to my family."

Sabo added that she had multiple people say they saw her in the Torch following the release of the story where she scored the game-winning penalty kick against Cedarville.

Ferris volleyball player Jess Angelo also recognized that a successful team receives more media coverage, and because the Bulldogs have been a consistently dominant program during her time at Ferris, she felt the Torch

has provided good coverage for the volleyball program. She did, however, question whether most students at Ferris would know how her volleyball team performed, but predicted most students would know about the football team's performance.

### TIMES ARE CHANGING

Supporting female athletes is equally as important as supporting male athletes, yet most of the media — including the Torch — has often fallen short. In a world where female athletics are growing, media coverage must grow with them.

For Angelo and Sabo, their experiences with athletics are vastly different from the experiences their mothers had.

"When my mom and grandma grew up, women did not play sports, like at all," Angelo said. "I think it's really cool to have the opportunity to play a college sport and be successful and inspire other kids to give it a shot."

Angelo, Sabo and McCartney all expressed how much they appreciate having a platform to inspire young girls to achieve their athletic dreams. Representing women in collegiate athletics is something these players deeply respect.

The importance of adequate

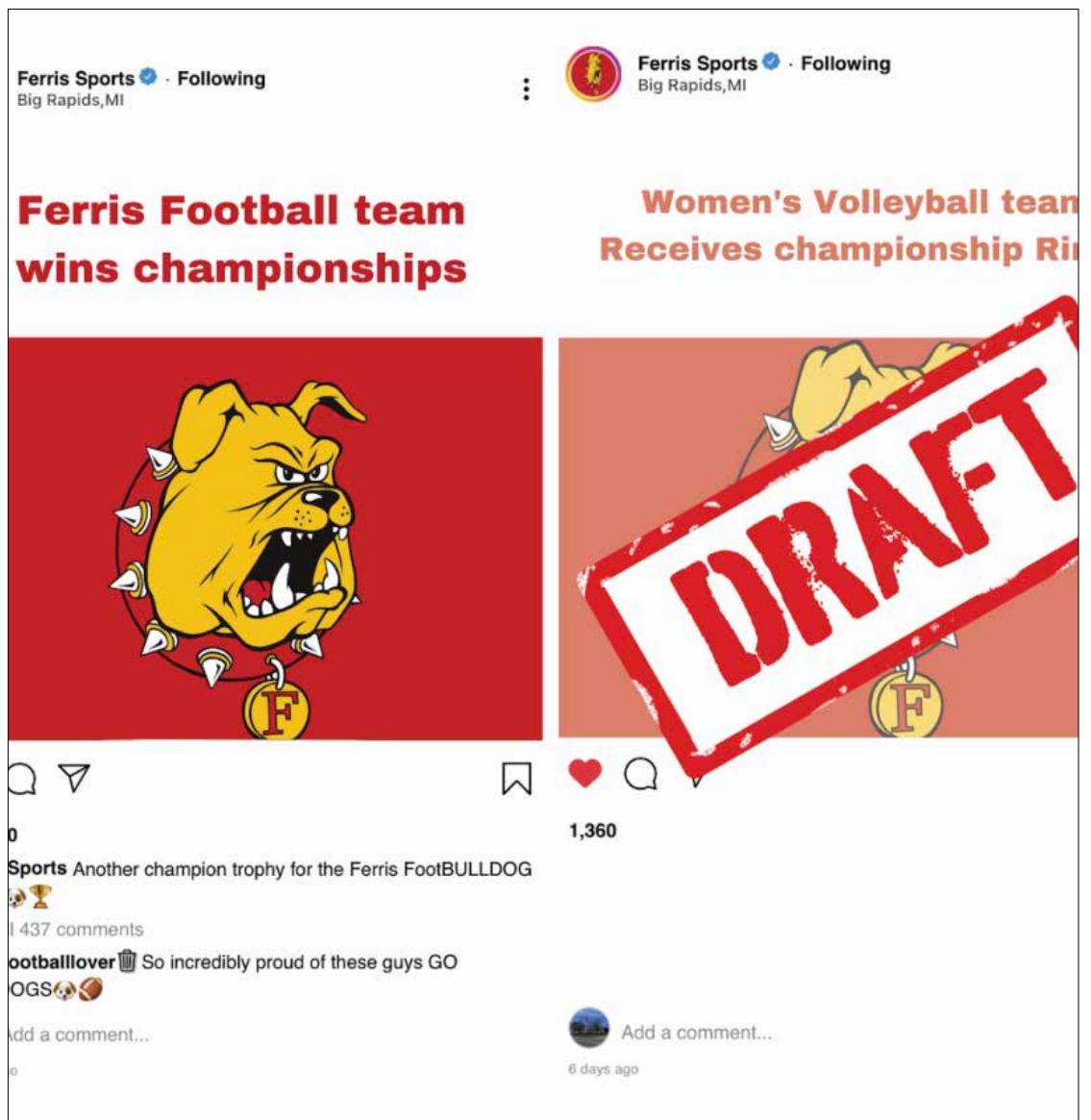
representation in media for female athletes is paramount. McCartney thinks the key to improving media coverage starts with marketing.

"During the year, you more hear what great games we have for the guys coming up and not necessarily one versus two in the female world," McCartney said. "I would just say marketing for both of them and just the same representation. If you have the top news company going to this 15 versus 14 in the nation game, then there's no reason you shouldn't be covering one and two for girls."

She added that it should not matter whether a good game is played on the men or the women's side because fans can enjoy either.

Progress has been made. Female sports receive higher viewership now than ever before. Angelo credited Title IX for allowing female athletes many of the same luxuries male athletes possess. Female athletes have an opportunity to represent women and inspire young girls to keep playing sports.

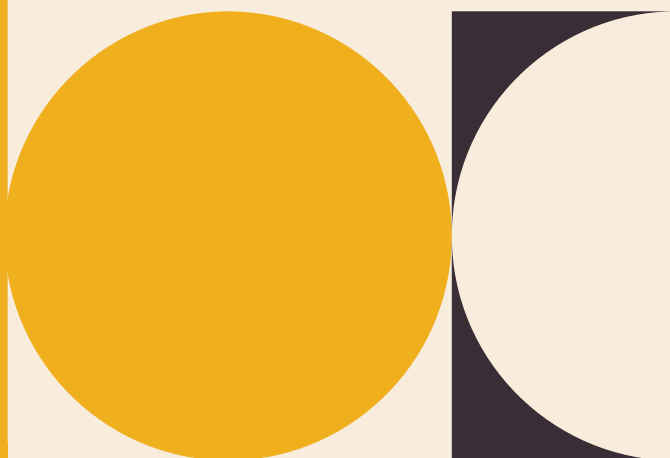
While steps have been taken in the right direction, there is still a long way to go. Until female athletes receive the same media attention as males, we as news entities have failed.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Freelance Reporter

Emergency Pride Special Edition

# More Than a Month



In the first four months of 2023, over 500 laws have been pitched to state legislatures that target everything from gender affirming care to books that tell positive, queer stories. As a paper that never gets a chance to share valuable LGBTQ+ stories in June, due to the nature of our print schedule, we wanted to step in and do the work while we still had the chance. We can't sit idly by while queer people are being erased like budget items. We must use our platform to help.

## Q&A with **Jay Kaplin**, LGBTQ+ Rights Project Staff Attorney at Mich. ACLU

**Noah Kolenda, Sienna Parmelee**  
Editor in Chief, Production Manager

### **Could you explain how some of these laws are even being passed though they don't appear to be constitutional?**

I think you have to understand that the politicians passing these laws are doing so for what they perceive is their political gain- mostly fundraising from their base. They are not concerned about whether such laws are discriminatory or violate constitutional rights. And should these laws be challenged (and they are being challenged in federal courts) they are banking on some very conservative judges (appointed during Trump's administration) to uphold some of them and if the US Supreme Court ends up taking these cases, that a conservative majority will prevail. But for the most part, they are looking at this in the short term- what do they gain from this. They are not considering any of the consequences, including who gets harmed.

### **How will these laws be enforceable? They read so vaguely, whose discretion does it fall under?**

Fortunately many of these laws either haven't taken effect yet, or have been enjoined (put on hold by some federal courts while they considering the constitutional challenges). You are correct that not a lot of thought has been given about how to enforce this and that's whole point. This is all about appealing to the conservative political base- damn the details, it's the short term gains that they can make.

### **Are we finally allowed to rest easy in Michigan? Are there other legal issues we should be paying attention to regarding our rights?**

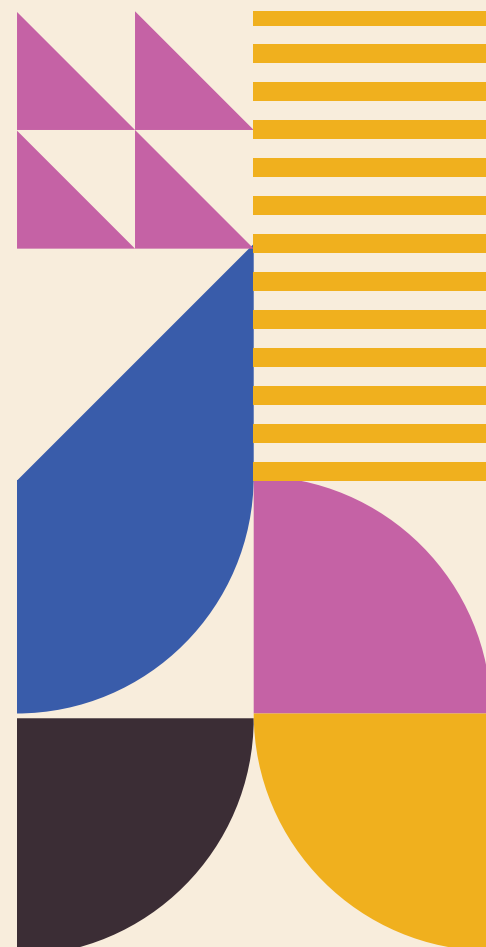
The reason we don't have laws like this in Michigan is because a majority of voters elected a Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Supreme Court, and legislature that are progressive and supportive of LGBTQ rights. If their opponents had won the 2022 election, we would be seeing a very different Michigan with these same discriminatory and cruel laws being passed. We can't afford to be complacent. We must vote and we must vote informed. And while Michigan right now doesn't have to worry about these laws passing in the next 2 years, we are seeing efforts at the local level- with members of the right wing being elected to local school boards advocating for book bans, prohibition on recognizing LGBTQ students, and discriminatory policies regarding trans students using restrooms in accordance with gender identity.

### **What can we do to help voice our disdain for these laws? Anything to say to students who may be going home to states not as safe as Michigan?**

We must vote, first and foremost. We must make sure we know who these politicians are who are introducing this legislation and which ones are voting for it- and we must hold them accountable come election time. We must raise our voice to call out the cruelty and the cynical calculations that they have made in supporting this. We must call them out on the lies and mistruths that they use to justify these discriminatory laws. And we must make sure that Michigan remains a safe haven for LGBTQ people living their authentic lives, including trans people accessing gender affirming care- and welcome those trans people who live in other states where it is being denied.

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# The importance of a safe space

## How Ferris is providing a safe home for transgender and genderfluid students



**Harmony Goodman**  
Freelance Reporter

**Disclaimer: Due to the nature of this story, the names of those interviewed have been redacted for their privacy and safety.**

With summer break around the corner, some Ferris students will soon go back into the “closet” with their gender identity.

With a dedicated liberation dorm hall for queer students, the LGBTQ+ Resource Center and name and pronoun-changing options for students, Ferris accommodates many students that identify under the LGBTQ+ umbrella.

For a lot of students, living on campus is a new start. This is due to all the new faces and because, for most college students, this will be the first time they get to experience living on their own. Transgender and genderfluid students find a lot of comfort in this, as it means they can be completely themselves and surround themselves with people who love them for who they are.

The campus life environment can also mean safety for transgender and genderfluid students who may not have the space back home to be open about their gender identity. After surveying nearly 35,000 LGBTQ+ youth from ages 13-24 in the US, The Trevor Project found that only one in three of those surveyed found their home to be an accepting environment.

For Student A, being on campus meant that she could be open about her identity

as a male-to-female transgender woman. She came out to her friend group and some select professors. She has been met with a lot of acceptance since deciding to be more open about her gender identity while attending Ferris.

“When I came to college, I decided to take my stand,” Student A said. “I want to be who I am. I want to go by my name and pronouns.”

The first step she took to achieve this was introducing herself to the band that she plays in on campus with her preferred name and letting them know her preferred pronouns. She received a lot of positive support from those in the band, which encouraged her to reach out to her RA.

“I told her, ‘This is my preferred name, but my family doesn’t like it,’” Student A said. “She has been super nice, and she gave me two sets of name cards.”

The two sets of name cards allow Student A to switch them out when her family visits. This gave her the opportunity to begin feeling like herself.

Student A hopes that her time at Ferris will help her build a stable environment for when she does decide to have another conversation with her parents about her gender identity, since the first and second conversation attempts did not go well.

“I love you, but you’ll always be my son,” is what her dad said when she tried to come out originally. She was then told

by her father that she was confused and that she didn’t feel this way, it was just other people telling her she did.

Even here on campus, Student A feels the need to hide in certain classes to avoid negative encounters with students and professors who may not take her identity seriously. However, overall she feels more support here than in her hometown.

“I feel like I’m more myself,” Student A said. “I am a lot less anxious.”

While Student A maintains a relationship with her parents, who have yet to fully accept her gender identity, some students are taking the opportunity to cut contact with those who are not supporting them. This is the case with Student B, who is a transgender, masculine, nonbinary person who uses both he/him and they/them pronouns. Since coming to Ferris, he was able to cut off contact with his unsupportive father. His mom, on the other hand, has been one of his biggest allies. Since his parents are divorced, he has been able to make his at-home life a lot better.

“We had a pretty big fight the day I moved into Ferris,” Student B said, describing the day he decided to have no contact with his father. “It just became the kind of thing I couldn’t talk about anymore, so I just stopped responding to the conversation.”

According to Student B, fights like

this were common between him and his father. He always got the impression that nothing was good enough if it wasn’t what his father wanted for him.

“I felt like I could break that contact with him in a safe way so he wouldn’t be able to fight me on it,” Student B said. “Before, he knew exactly where I lived, and he knew where all my friends lived. But now he knows I’m on campus, but I don’t even think he knows what dorm I live in.”

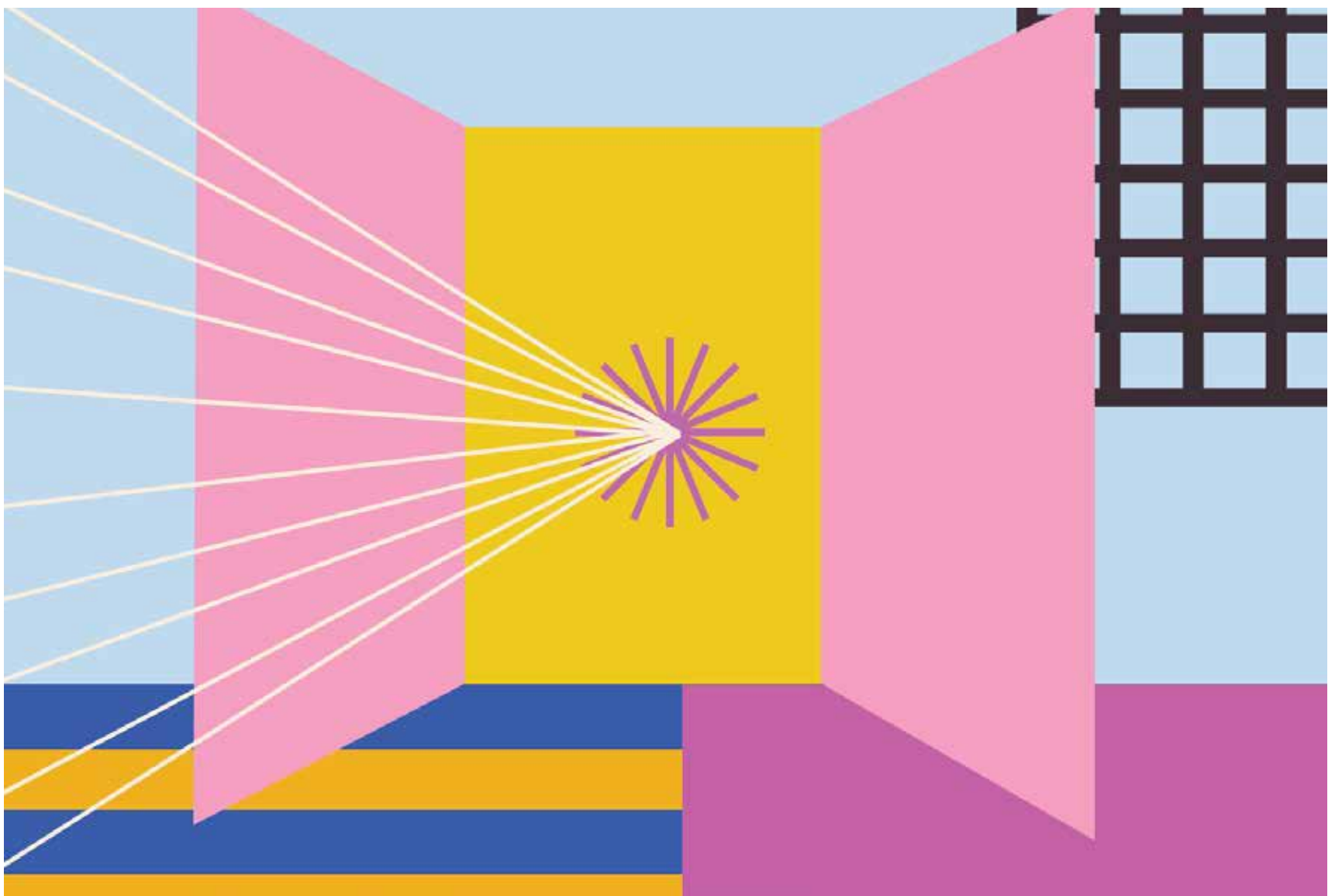
Now, he has been able to fully live his life and be his true, honest self. He was able to change his name through the school and Canvas, and he is very thankful that the process was fairly easy.

This is not to say that campus life hasn’t had its flaws when it comes to supporting transgender and genderfluid students.

“I had a teacher use air quotes while saying the word male in my direction,” Student B said. “It’s never been anything specific enough for it to feel like an actual attack, but it feels aggressive enough that it does affect my relationship with the professor.”

With the incident that happened with Student B, it’s clear that while Ferris is full of mostly accepting staff, this may not be true for them all.

Overall, Ferris has been a safe outlet for students to get away from their home lives and be their true selves.





# The nonbinary experience



**Marlow Losey**  
Copy Editor

There are a number of phrases I could use to describe myself.

I am a junior in the digital animation and game design program. I am a member of the LGBTQ+ community. I am pansexual, meaning that gender is not something I consider when looking for a romantic or sexual partner. I am demisexual, meaning that an emotional connection is necessary for me to feel a sexual attraction to an individual. I am an artist. I am a writer. I am someone who enjoys quiet social gatherings. I am a kind person. I am nonbinary.

I chose to put on many of these labels, like the ones that are derived from the hobbies I take on. Many other labels, such as the ones that are derived from my physical appearance and my place in the LGBTQ+ community, are labels that I cannot remove from myself.

## I AM NOT A WOMAN

Growing up as a woman felt like wearing a pair of shoes that didn't fit. Proclaiming I was a woman felt like a statement that was simply incorrect. Going by my birth name felt like wearing shoes that squeezed my toes too tight. Being treated as a woman feels like wearing heels I can't walk in. And male doesn't fit me either.

Until my college years, I thought these were the only shoes in existence. So I spent my years dealing with the pain of tight shoes, questioning why they felt so tight when the same pair fit perfectly fine on other women.

Realizing the existence of other labels and finding one that fit felt like breathing after being suffocated. Imagine running a track with shoes too tight only to discover the existence of shoes that fit, shoes you could have been running comfortably in the whole time. For me, being nonbinary is just that. Nonbinary is a label to describe someone who does not fit in male or female shoes.

## THE NONBINARY EXPERIENCE

Just as I did not realize genders other than male and female existed until I reached college, many others, especially those of older generations, do not know either. This makes it incredibly hard to prove that I am nonbinary.

As a cis-gendered individual, which is someone who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth, you may walk around and have everyone know exactly what you are. Nonbinary people do not get this privilege.

Even while openly expressing who I am, I am still told that I am a woman, and

people continue to refer to me as such. Sometimes, coming out feels like talking to a wall.

Many nonbinary people, including myself, present themselves as the gender they were assigned at birth. This leads many people to believe the way we present ourselves is exactly who we are.

"No one knows I'm nonbinary unless they ask about it directly. Most people assume that I'm a woman, and they don't question it," LGBTQ+ Resource Center Coordinator Becca Osborne said. "There's this expectation to look and act androgynous. I felt like I couldn't claim this identity unless I looked the part."

Osborne expressed feeling comfortable with all pronouns and being seen as any gender. Since they present femininely, they are sometimes frustrated to see their masculine and androgynous sides ignored.

Others, such as communications senior Jason Fitzpatrick, express their gender fluidly. Fitzpatrick feels comfortable in both men's and women's clothing and with using both masculine and feminine pronouns. Since he feels no aversion to presenting masculine and using masculine pronouns, it has felt hard for him to be perceived as a gender.

"As [a friend of mine] described what gender meant to them, I realized that I

fit this non-man, non-woman third group outside this binary paradigm," Fitzpatrick said. "I realized that I have no sense of 'male-ness.' I assumed that since I did not experience gender dysphoria, I could not be nonbinary."

Fitzpatrick described his experience as feeling like he has no connection to the male or female gender. At the same time, both male and female presentations and pronouns felt equally acceptable to refer to himself. He expressed feeling most comfortable using he/him pronouns and expressing as feminine to experience a sense of both.

"I dressed in men's clothing because I was afraid of how I would be perceived for wearing women's clothes. After taking a brave step to wear a skirt, I realized I like women's clothing just as much as men's," Fitzpatrick said. "But regardless of what I wear, I always feel myself, without any sense of [being] fully male or female."

I see myself as purely androgynous. I feel a strong disconnect between seeing myself as either male or female. I am happy to have found a gender that fits me after believing male and female were the only options for so long. I am happy to have found spaces that recognize me as nonbinary and allow me to be my most genuine self.

## HOW TO BE AN ALLY

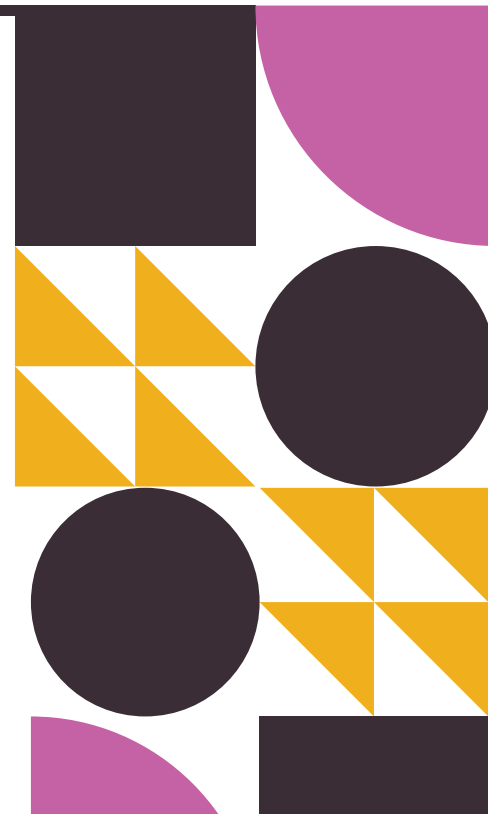
- It isn't rude to ask what someone's gender is. A majority of people, both cis-gender and those within the transgender and nonbinary spectrum, are open about gender and willing to share. If you are unsure how to refer to someone, ask!
- There are ways to be polite without using "sir" or "ma'am." When referring to a stranger, it is good to leave out gendered references. Saying "excuse me" works much better than "excuse me, sir."
- Instead of using "his" or "her" when referring to someone with an unknown gender, use "they." Instead of saying, "Students

will do a presentation on his or her work," try, "Students will do a presentation on their work." "His or her" makes people who do not use "he" or "she" pronouns feel ignored and like they do not exist.

- If someone is trusting you with information regarding their gender identity, listen. A transgender or nonbinary person is coming out to you with the expectation of being respected. Meaning, they want to be referred to as what they are, not what you think they are.
- Familiarize yourself with terminology, such as learning how to use they/them pronouns and

neo pronouns.

- If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun, simply correct yourself and move on. It is not the end of the world if it is an accident.
- It's okay if it doesn't make sense. Respect people anyway. You do not understand because you have not lived the life of a transgender or nonbinary person. Open your mind to learning more about other people, and eventually it will make sense.
- Treat people like people. We are all living and experiencing the same planet Earth, so treat everyone how you want to be treated on a daily basis.



# Being 'Different' in the face of Adversity

Sean Rowen discusses what it is like being a trans, disabled, gay artist.

**Jonathen Hart**  
News Reporter

Graphic design freshman Sean Rowen enjoys art, being an entrepreneur and hanging out with his rabbit, Bean, and his fiancé, Tyler Steele, who is also his home-aid.

Rowen was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, which is a connective tissue disorder that causes his joints to dislocate. It also causes Rowen to sometimes pass out when he goes from sitting to standing, so he also uses a wheelchair to get around.

As Rowen has become familiar with Ferris, he has noticed many issues that prevent the campus from being completely accessible to him.

"I would like Ferris to repave the sidewalks," Rowen said. "That is one of the biggest things Ferris could improve for my disability, due to my using a wheelchair. Large gaps have caused me to flip out of my chair and dislocate my shoulder."

Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome has made it harder for Rowen to do some of the things he loves.

"I really enjoy art, and due to my fingers dislocating, I have a hard time with that," Rowen said. "I also really enjoy playing flute, and because of my

shoulder, I can't do that for a long time. I use braces and supports to be able to do those, but I still struggle."

As Rowen's fiancé, Steele is also able to paint Rowen in a unique light.

"[Rowen] is incredibly understanding, supportive and determined," Steele said. "He listens when people need to talk, he offers emotional support and advice when necessary. He loves helping other people and having new experiences. When something gets in the way of him doing something he wants to do, he works to solve that problem, and he does very well with that. He's also incredibly creative with not only his problem-solving but with his art. He loves to make new things and try out different ideas."

As Rowen's home-aid, Steele is also there to push his wheelchair most of the time or help him grab food. One of the harder things for Rowen is finding a place to work. He has created his own online business, since people won't hire him.

"My business is online, which I can do fairly easily, but trying to find a job is incredibly difficult," Rowen said. "No one really wants to hire someone in a wheelchair, even if I'm qualified for the job, and



Photo Provided by Sean Rowen

## Sean Rowen poses with fiancé, Tyler Steele

that's something I'm struggling with."

Rowen believes that employers should be able to look past things, like being in a wheelchair, and be more open to who they are hiring. They should not turn them away simply because of a disability.

"Employers should be willing to learn and accept change as needed," Rowen said. "For example, letting a cashier sit instead of stand, letting people wear earplugs to prevent over-stimulation [or] asking people what they need instead of assuming what accommodations are or aren't needed."

As a disabled, gay, transgender artist, it can be hard to get people to support his business, but it hasn't stopped Rowen

in the slightest.

"I have a Redbubble shop where I can sell designs that I make on shirts, phone cases, pretty much anything," Rowen said. "I started that so I could share my art and make a little bit of money from it. Most of my designs are LGBTQ+ and disability stuff."

Rowen believes Ferris needs to do more for their LGBTQ+ community.

"I think more education would solve a lot of issues, honestly. Most people aren't very educated on LGBTQ+ and disability issues," Rowen said.

Overall, Rowen has faced a lot of challenges throughout his life, but he has managed to overcome them at any cost.

# We're losing valuable ground

## 2023 GLAAD reports reveals alarming trend

**Noah Kolenda**  
Editor-in-Chief

I remember the first gay couple I saw on the small screen, Ben and Derek from season two of "Parks and Recreation." They played out every stereotype of the time. They were rude, judgmental, sexist and overtly work-adverse. Sure, they were being shoved into a blasé box because of the nature of the character they were interacting with. Still, being the first primetime example of the LGBTQ+ I'd seen, it set a tone and likely regressed my own journey. They weren't liked, and they set a horrid example for me, as I was just sorting out what being gay even meant.

Growing up in a small town, media like primetime TV and social outlets like YouTube were where I saw representation of myself. It wasn't until the mid 2010s that I started to see healthy, queer relationships in mainstream media, even if it was few and far between.

As time crept on, we were seemingly gaining positive ground, but according to the numbers this year, that's not the case.

The 2023 "Where We Are on TV" report from GLAAD, the LGBTQ+ media advocacy organization, found that an alarming number of LGBTQ+ inclusive programming and characters have or will exit our TVs from cable, broadcast and streaming this year. 54 inclusive programs have faced the chopping block for the fall 2022 to spring 2023 TV season, causing an astounding 140 LGBTQ+ characters to exit TV. That's just shy of 25% of the overall LGBTQ+ representation on TV. 52% of the LGBTQ+ characters lost were women, and 56% of them are non-white.

Further, other forms of representation are losing massive amounts of their tiny footholds, like 100% of the representation of those living with HIV and AIDS and 63% of the queer disabled representation vanishing from cable, broadcast and streaming.

From a consumer perspective, it feels like the only queer content that studios are willing to make is if it's based off white, gay men. It reads like the only way that it will be accepted in the mainstream

is if only one toe is dipped into the waters of change and evolution. For instance, in 2023, HIV is highly treatable, and people can live with it undetectable for the rest of their life if they stick to a medication regimen. Yet, the only way you'd be able to learn that from the mainstream media come fall of 2023 is medication ads.

This trend must be a blip in history. We cannot lose the little footholds we've gained for two main reasons. First and foremost, seeing yourself in the media, normalized and mainstream, is affirming. Having someone to look up to whom you see yourself in feels like a way out, a means of being less alone when you don't see yourself in others in your daily life. Further, it can exemplify positive narratives surrounding queer people, where some may only get negative ones due to the nature of their situation. The stats don't lie, either. 89% of LGBTQ+ youth responded that they felt good about being LGBTQ+ when they saw themselves represented in the media.

Finally, representation like this normal-

izes it outwards. With a record number of state legislation targeting the LGBTQ+ community, clocking in at north of 500 as of last week, according to Human Rights Campaign, education is more necessary than ever. While only 34 of those passed, they ban gender-affirming care, target drag performances, allow discrimination, alter curriculum and allow for the banning of books due to what from the outside looks like fear and ignorance. Showing that we're just regular people, loving who we love or living as the gender we feel can go a long way in paving the path for acceptance to those who don't have the exposure to be able to look through this lens.

In a time where it's so scary and genuinely unsafe for the LGBTQ+ to exist in some parts of the country and with LGBTQ+ youth suicide rates so high due to ostracization, media that elevates positive queer stories is more important than ever. The downtrend in 2023 must remain an outlier.



# Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

## Celebration of all cultures

33rd annual Festival of Cultures



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Torch Photographer

**Volunteers handing out traditional cuisine to students and members of the community at the Multicultural Festival.**



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Torch Photographer

**Volunteers creating traditional henna art for students and members of the community.**

**Marlow Losey**  
Copy Editor

The Office of International Education and the International Student Organization welcomed students and the public to the 33rd annual Festival of Cultures.

Participants were welcomed to tables that represented various countries and provided food samples. Students on campus were able to perform with rehearsed music and dances representing their culture. Members could also take part in a “guess the country” game.

Posters of information from each country, a table for henna, a photo booth and a coloring room for younger attendees were available. ISO members each put together a poster board of traditions, sports, food and anything special from the culture of the country they are from.

This has been the first in-person event the ISO has held since 2019 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, it’s “back and it’s bigger than ever,” according to ISO Vice President Talah Muhammad. When the ISO tried hosting this event virtually one year, participants were able to submit videos of their performances. However, they were not able to share food through the online festival, which holds a large part of the festival’s heart.

“During COVID, this [event] was impossible with so many people gathered in one place,” Muhammad said. “They did try to have this online, but you can’t share food, so it doesn’t really work.”

OIE recruiter Jacob VanLaar believes the importance of the event comes from exposing the campus and the Big Rapids community to a great diversity of cultures. He was excited to hold the festival again to

be able to share “all of the cultures and good foods.”

“We were really excited to help our community learn more about the diversity and cultures that we have here on campus,” VanLaar said. “This allows our students to share their cultures with Ferris’ campus, share their food, their songs and [representations of] where they’re from.”

The Hispanic Student Organization and the Center of Latin@ Studies also participated in the event. HSO Secretary Paige Williams went to this event for the first time.

“This brings us closer to people who are world citizens and feel less threatened and more safe with different cultures. That kind of thing brings people together,” Williams said.

Although the volunteering students and faculty serve different roles from each other, the inspiration, motivation and importance of putting the event together remained similar. The room was filled with volunteers eager to share items from where they are from.

Advisor of Art and Science Education Dave Schrock believes that finding volunteers for an event like this “doesn’t take much of a nudge” because multicultural students are proud of their country and miss it. He sums up the event as a “celebration of different cultures that we all have here at Ferris.”

“As an advisor, you go into a university learning skills and knowledge,” Schrock said. “Another big part of that is getting exposed to... different ways of thinking and different backgrounds.”

The OIE and ISO hope to bring more cultural events to campus in the future.



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Torch Photographer

**Volunteers dressed in traditional Ethiopian clothing serve food at the International Festival on Sunday afternoon.**



# Program Spotlight

## Learn by doing

**Jasmine Baar**  
Freelance Reporter

As Ferris is known for having the most hands on television and digital media production program in the state, TDMP seniors work hard to finish their senior sequence.

There are only two courses in the entire TDMP program's curriculum where students are not making media productions. These courses are Intro to Digital Media and Script Writing. Every other course involves intense video production that incorporates hands-on experience.

Ferris' TDMP program is distinguishable from other degree programs because the curriculum is not entirely theory-based. The program is designed for students to get immersive industry experience.

School of Digital Media professor and 2023 Distinguished Teacher Award recipient Joshua Pardon compares the art of TDMP to painting.

"A painter needs to know how to wield their paintbrush in order to make great art," Pardon said. "Just like our students need to know how to wield cameras, microphones and software to be able to make great visual storytelling."

Pardon teaches a seminar course and a TV and digital media course. Within these courses, he helps his students get placed for their internships. Every TDMP se-

nior must take an 18-credit internship over the span of six months.

Covering different forms of media like broadcast, narrative and documentary production, the TDMP program at Ferris has versatile courses that prepare students for the media workforce.

TDMP senior Davis Fosgitt believes that the program was "designed to make a well-rounded media professional."

Fosgitt competed with many of his classmates for a position with Yellow Dog Creative. Fosgitt enjoyed the competitiveness around applying and interviewing with his classmates. He accepted his internship offer with them on April 19.

"[Competing] forces you to become the best version of yourself," Fosgitt said.

The internship is meant to catapult students into the workforce, which the curriculum constantly prepares them for.

"Ferris Sports Update" is a show that is completely produced by TDMP seniors. This project is built into the program to develop students' skills in media production.

The show is integrated into an advanced producing and directing course taught by Glen Okonoski. Students rotate through different positions like producer, director, technical director, audio mixer, lighting, graphics, stage manager and camera operator.



Photo by: Nolan Harris | News Reporter

**Andrew Tingley (left) helps organize and run shows put on by TDMP students.**

TDMP senior Micah Sealock prefers doing camera work and editing.

"I came to Ferris from Nebraska with pretty much no knowledge of working with cameras, editing or software, but now I'm about to accept an internship and graduate, and I can confidently say I've grown so much from where I started," Sealock said.

The program has professors that come straight from the industry. With this being said, their expectations are set at the industry level.

TDMP senior William Mcelfresh worked alongside his professor Nick Kuiper during the filming of "Mystic Michigan," a series of books by Mark Jager.

"When you're working alongside these professors in the field, they

don't feel like teachers, they feel like peers," Mcelfresh said. "They assist you in creating your vision."

The senior sequence class has been creating a visual story to correlate with the "Mystic Michigan" books throughout the semester, following in the last senior sequence's footsteps.

As an instructional design professor and "Mystic Michigan" overseer, Kuiper consistently worked alongside students in the field to enrich their ideas on significant techniques. Mcelfresh stressed that Kuiper's high standards and style of teaching helped him become more aware of mediocre work compared to greatness.

"The intricacies that he emphasizes about film and editing separate an amateur from a professional," Mcelfresh said.

Currently, all faculty offices are located in Bishop Hall, while most TDMP courses take place in the IRC. The fall semester will bring huge changes to the TDMP program, as the entirety of the School of Digital Media is moving over to the Center for Virtual Learning.

"One thing we're looking forward to is being able to have our offices and classrooms on the same floor of the same building in the Center for Virtual Learning," Pardon said.

As the semester is coming to an end, TDMP students are finishing their senior sequence. The 30-minute, three-segment show will premiere on May 4 in room 111 of the Business Building.

# Relaunching the Latin@ Alumni Association

## Learn more about the Latin@ Alumni Association and its board members

**Kylah Robinson**  
Culture Reporter

What started out as three students creating a project for a public advocacy class has resulted in the relaunching of Ferris' Latin@ Alumni Association.

The class project was a semester long assignment in which students had to focus on a topic about advocacy. The three students chose to relaunch the association for not only the class, but for the campus as well.

Communication studies and Spanish senior Berenise Alvarez was one of the students that assisted with the relaunch. She is also the secretary of Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority Inc., Ferris' only multicultural sorority. She believes the relaunch will greatly

impact other Latino students on campus.

"The Latin@ Alumni Association will help bridge that gap between undergrad and the transition post-graduation," Alvarez said. "This association will help connect Ferris Latin@ alumni together so they can serve as mentors for the undergrad students."

After the project was finished, Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority Inc. hosted a panel with the Latin@ Alumni Association's board members to introduce themselves, share personal experiences as undergraduate students and teach attendees how to network.

As all panelists were Ferris alumni, each spoke about their experience with transitioning out of college into the real world. Latin@ Alumni Association Co-Chair

Paola Mendivil contributed her story about growing up in Mexico, moving to Grand Rapids and starting a life there.

"Once I graduated in 2017, I had that clear goal of helping other entrepreneurs to their dreams with a small business," Mendivil said.

Latin@ Alumni Association Secretary Daniel Rivera struggled with feeling isolated and figuring out what to do with his time after he graduated.

"It is tough, especially if you identify as a first [generation] student [because] then you become a first [generation] professional," Rivera said. "I struggled a lot with being isolated and figuring out how [to] occupy my time because it does get better in terms of stress."

Event Advisor Veronica Mascorro was an involved undergraduate

student as an interim writer for the Torch. She believed this gave her many opportunities to go to events and meet new people. She also worked at the writing center.

She started applying to graduate schools that had programs that focused on Hispanic history, which is her passion.

When she was accepted into Western Michigan University, she was required to take an additional year to prove to them that she proficiently spoke Spanish.

"It was off-putting because I've been speaking Spanish my whole life," Mascorro said. "It felt like they were saying to me, 'You're not Hispanic enough. You're not Mexican enough.'"

Chair board member Leonardo Almanza saw "unfairness" on campus with the lack of Latino

representation during his undergraduate years. The Black Lives Matter movement and the death of George Floyd encouraged him to advocate for minorities.

"I really realized, and I based this off what [Gov.] Gretchen Whitmer said, 'Be the voice for others that are still trying to find their own,'" Almanza said. "People don't know how to speak up, and that's okay. I know I can, so let me use that for positive impact."

If you would like to contact the Latin@ Alumni Association or discuss networking practices, please visit the Center for Latin@ Studies for more information.



# Media Minute

## A24's 'Beef' is exhilarating

**Evan Hibbard**  
Freelance Photographer

A24's road rage dramedy "Beef" just debuted on Netflix and is currently ranked #2 in the platforms Top 10 Show's in the US Today rankings.

The show traces two equally messed up and down-on-their-luck people in Los Angeles that get into a road rage incident at a Whole Foods-like store parking lot.

Steven Yeun plays Danny Cho, the owner of a small and failing construction business and a man who will do anything it takes to scrape by, as evidenced by later events. He lives in a modest apartment with his underachieving younger brother, Paul, who refuses to get a job at the beginning of the show because he wants to become a billionaire from Bitcoin.

Comedian Ali Wong plays Danny's counterpart, Amy Lau, the owner of a small but successful plant store that has been bought by Forsters, the Whole Foods equivalent mentioned earlier. When Amy and Danny accidentally almost crash into each other in the Forsters parking lot, it sets forth an unpredictable chain of events, although there will be no spoilers here.

One major problem this show could have is that it is kind of a slow burn for the first five episodes or so, and it just seems like a run-of-the-mill revenge TV show until it crosses the halfway point. The biggest turning point comes at the end of episode seven and will leave you wanting to finish the show immediately. Most casual TV watchers may be turned away by the slow build-up, but it becomes so worth it by the end.

Without trying to give too much away, the ninth and most intense episode will definitely leave your jaw on the floor. This is where the show really takes a turn from mature comedy to a full-on crime thriller, as everything begins to hit the fan and spell disaster for Danny and Amy.

Another bright spot in the show is the earlier mentioned Paul, portrayed by newcomer Young Mazino in his biggest role yet.

After this show, he should have absolutely no trouble getting roles in more shows and movies, as he is undoubtedly one of the best parts of the show.

Even though Wong is a starring member of the cast, most of the comic relief comes from Paul, the dim-witted but somewhat lovable younger brother of Danny who gets himself caught up in his brother's drama. Mazino's performance is so impressive because he tows the line between comedic and dramatic acting so well that when he finally realizes how deep he is, the viewer can't help but feel a little sorry for him.

Another incredible performance in the show is unsurprisingly Yeun as Danny, although it's a different kind of character than we have mostly seen him play in the past. Yeun has mostly gotten used to playing the good guy ever since his success in "The Walking Dead" and "Minari," so it's a little surprising that he handles the arrogant and apathetic Danny so well.

Even in the Korean-language thriller "Burning," where he plays the main villain, he's a very cool and subdued character with the typical bright smile that the viewer recognizes from Yeun as a good guy. In "Beef," however, he's a rude jerk who essentially doesn't realize how dangerous he's acting until it's too late.

The last standout performance in the show is Wong, who comes as a surprise to the dramatic front. While she was in "Birds of Prey" and "Always Be My Maybe," which both had some drama in them, she really gets to flex her dramatic muscles in this show, since Mazino handles most of the comedic relief.

Overall, "Beef" is an exhilarating and rewatchable thrill ride that will cause even the most cynical viewers to shed a tear by the penultimate episode. The show earns an 8/10 here and is available to watch on Netflix right now.

# Hand in Hand, Heart to Heart



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Torch Photographer

Brianna Wolak shoots a basket in this year's Heart to Heart Fundraiser.



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Torch Photographer

Jeremiah Housey took part in a dunk contest after the second quarter of the game.

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# Sports

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

## Football springs into action

Bulldogs conclude spring schedule with annual Crimson and Gold game



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Multimedia Editor

Carson Gulker hands to Dorion Riley during the Crimson and Gold game. The White Team beat the Red Team 43-35.

Jeffery Walker  
Sports Reporter

Bulldog football is officially around the corner, as the Bulldogs just competed in their 2023 season spring game.

“Going into spring ball, there’s three goals,” head coach Tony Annese said. “One is to stay healthy, which we did really good with that. Two is to have a lot of fun, and three is to grow.”

The Bulldogs competed in their spring game, which saw Team White defeat Team Red 43-35.

The scoring for the spring game was one point for 10-yard plays, first downs and extra points, three points for forcing a punt and field goals, five points for three and outs and six points for touchdowns and takeaways.

Team White scored two times on the day. First was a 30-yard touchdown pass from Jesse Rivera to Cameron Underwood with an extra point made by Eddie Jewett.

The second touchdown for the White Team was a one-yard rushing touchdown by Trent Hill with an extra point made by Jewett.

The defense accounted for 16 points for Team White with two three and outs and punts.

For Team Red, one touchdown was scored in the game, and it was a touchdown pass from Zak Ahern to Emari O’Brien in the corner of the endzone with an extra point by Jewett. Jewett also kicked a field goal.

“I just [saw] the one-on-one matchup,” O’Brien said. “I just went to my favorite

move, which is a hesitation change of speed. I just did a little hesitation, he bit on it [and] I broke out, and once the ball was in the air, it was only me who could stop me from catching it.”

On the defensive side of the ball, the Red Team scored 17 points, forcing two punts, a three and out and a takeaway.

“We’re just expecting a lot of energy,” Major Dedmond said. “[We’re] looking to grow as one unit like we’ve been doing the last couple years and just coming together and try to put another run.”

The Bulldogs played against each other during the spring game, but they will come together as a team this season to make a run for their third consecutive national championship win.

“Going out with a bang, leaving no regrets,” Dedmond said. “One thing my father always told me is leave nothing on the table and leave no regrets.”

As the Bulldogs gear up to take on the 2023-24 season, the team will be looking to “leave no regrets.”

The Bulldogs will be back in action for the season opener against Mercyhurst at Top Taggart Field on Thursday, Aug. 31.

“Our focal point is just to play to beat Mercyhurst,” Annese said. “How exciting it is when... it’s Labor Day weekend on a Thursday and we’re playing here at Top Taggart. The goal will be to win that game.”



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Multimedia Editor

The Bulldogs concluded the Spring schedule coming off back-to-back national championships.

### SCORECARD

#### Men’s Golf

April 21-22 - Ferris lost in GLI-AC Semifinals

#### Women’s Golf

April 21-23 - Ferris 1st in GLIAC Championships

#### Men’s Tennis

April 22 - Ferris 4, Davenport 0  
April 23 - Wayne State 4, Ferris 0



# Drought over

## Women's golf wins first GLIAC championship in nearly 20 years

Joseph Nagy  
Sports Reporter

The last time that the Ferris women's golf team hoisted the conference trophy overhead, the housing market was on the verge of crashing.

The Bulldogs started the three day tournament on Friday, April 21, and found themselves right behind Wayne State heading into the semifinals. Posting a team score of -7 after the first 18, head coach Sam Stark's squad was poised for the semifinals. Drawing arch rival Grand Valley State for day two, they had no easy task ahead of them.

Junior Alayna Eldred posted the best lowest 18-hole score that Ferris women's golf has ever seen en route to her victory, while Abby Grevel and Dani Staskowski won their matches by four strokes and two strokes, respectively. The team won 3-1-1 to earn a spot in the championship round the following day against Saginaw Valley.

"We broke our team school record twice during the stroke play portion, Alayna Eldred broke our 18-hole scoring record and we had three other players break par during those first two rounds," Stark said.

Facing the Cardinals in the final round, a new scoring system was put in place. Each match was scored by the cumulative

number of strokes won, rather than the number of holes won.

Posting four sub-80 stroke performances across the board, the Bulldogs put up a strong fight that wouldn't be topped by Saginaw Valley. Freshman standout Lizzie Anderson won her match by one-stroke after posting a 77. Staskowski would have a back and forth front nine and ultimately captured her victory by four strokes, and Eldred held on with some late round insurance to win by two strokes.

Ferris State women's golf found themselves atop the GLIAC, dethroning a Grand Valley team who had won the league last year and 13 out of the last 15 years.

"Winning our first conference championship since 2007 is a huge step for our program," Stark said. "It validates the hard work our players have been putting in, and it reinforces that the program is moving in the right direction."

The Bulldogs will shift their focus quickly, as the NCAA tournament selections will be announced later this week. A very real possibility of repeat opponents is on the table, as both Wayne State and Grand Valley State are near the top of the regional rankings.

"We are peaking at the right time and are excited to head to NCAA Regionals in two weeks," Stark said.



Photo by: Joshua Pickler | Saginaw Valley State Athletics

The Bulldogs celebrate their GLIAC Championship victory.

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