

## Waka Flocka sets Ferris aflame



Photo by: Dylan Rider | Opinions Editor

Over 1,100 people gathered in Williams Auditorium to watch “No Hands” rapper Waka Flocka Flame’s performance.

### ‘It was the most incredible moment of my entire life,’ one student said

Dylan Rider  
Opinions Editor

Rapper Waka Flocka Flame went “hard in the paint” during his performance in front of a packed Williams Auditorium crowd.

The concert, attended by at least 1,169 people, brought a party to Williams Auditorium. When Waka Flocka Flame, whose name is Juaquin Malphurs, began, he put the auditorium in a trance with performances of “Hard in Da Paint,” “No Hands,” “Wild Boy” and “For My Dawgs.”

Malphurs’ performance included a very up-close and personal experience for Ferris students. Malphurs walked through the enormous crowd, danced with concert-goers by the barricades, took photos and videos with fans and even brought two students up on the stage with him.

Marketing senior James Abbott was one of the lucky fans to be brought up on stage with Malphurs to dance with him.

“I hopped over the fence, walked up on stage and felt Waka Flocka’s shoulder and his arm to make sure it was real,” Abbott said. “I started hyperventilating... Then I looked at Waka Flocka, and I looked at the audience and gained my composure. He

asked me, ‘Hey bro, you know how to do this dance?’ I looked in his eyes and said to him with all seriousness, ‘I know how to effing dance.’ And I just started going ham.”

**“I hopped over the fence, walked up on stage and felt Waka Flocka’s shoulder and his arm to make sure it was real.”**

Abbott thanked Malphurs for the experience and said that “it was the most incredible moment of [his] entire life.”

Opening for Malphurs was Ferris’ own music and entertainment business junior Jayden Anderson, who goes by Nilly Mittenz. Anderson started the Ferris crowd off with some of his songs and brought some of his friends out to rap with him.

Anderson, a Niles, Michigan, native, feels

like opening for this show helped validate his dreams of being a rapper.

“I have a lot of big dreams, and it’s moments like this that make it real,” Anderson said. “It’s reality. It’s not just dreams in my head. It’s, ‘I’m opening up for Waka.’ It’s not just my friends, it’s random people, people who don’t know me, saying ‘I’m good. It’s that type of stuff that makes it all worthwhile.”

Many concertgoers lined up hours early in a line that wrapped around Williams Auditorium. One of the students lined up in advance was Abbott, who got in line a full two hours and 45 minutes before the concert was scheduled to begin.

The concert was planned and directed by Ferris’ Entertainment Unlimited. Their last spring concert brought the band Lanco to Big Rapids.

Vice President of Programming for Entertainment Unlimited Alexis Stump heavily underestimated the turnout, as their last spring concert only brought a fraction of what was seen on Wednesday night.

“At first I was just like, ‘Okay, we’re gonna have like we had last year, a little over 500, so we’ll hit maybe like 800 max,” Stump said. “I know we hit over 1000. So that was

very promising. We’ve never seen Williams fill up this much.”

Stump also said that with Entertainment Unlimited now having a budget for events like this, that it is “exciting to see how we’re going to go forward” knowing how much of turnout events like this concert can bring.

Response to the spring concert has been overwhelmingly positive, creating a night that Williams Auditorium has not seen in a very long time.

Welding engineering junior Brendan Harwood, who was front row for the show, expressed how important he felt the concert was for the Ferris community.

“I feel like to get the school kind of back together, as far as community wise, we need events like this,” Harwood said. “It seemed like there was a bit of a shattering with COVID and people not being here. I think big events like this help the campus come back together.”

Echoing Abbott, Harwood called the concert “one of the best experiences [they’ve] had as a student.”

Entertainment Unlimited’s next event will be their Spring Fling on April 27.

# News

Jessica Oakes | News Editor | oakesj3@ferris.edu

## Success of Ferris-Con marks RHA revival



Photo by: Nolan Harris | News Reporter

Over 200 Ferris community members met at the David L. Eisler Center for Ferris-Con, a fan convention and “passion project” hosted by the Residence Hall Association.

### Disbanded for two years, the Residence Hall Association returns

Nolan Harris  
News Reporter

The end of March featured the very first student-run convention at Ferris, named Ferris-Con, a passion project led by Residence Hall Association Vice President Lando Steel.

Steel wanted Ferris-Con to be a celebration and nexus of geek culture and diverse interests on campus. Over 200 people came to Friday’s event.

The RHA was out of commission when every e-board member left due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After two years, Steel returned to a full e-board this semester as vice president.

The new RHA President Faith

Faile boasts this event as a revival of the organization.

With the success of the Stuff-a-Plush and Ferris-Con and other Stuff-a-Plush events on the way, the RHA feels good about their place on campus and is excited for future events.

“I realized that we have a lot of digital media presence on our campus, and we do not have a lot of ways for people to express that interest,” Steel, a digital animation and game design senior, said. “We do not have a lot of ways for people who like pop culture, anime and video games to come together. We do have the anime club and things like that, but why not bring all these people into one space and enjoy things together?”

Ferris-Con offered more than an opportunity to dress up and sing karaoke, eat food and play VR games. Different RSOs were tabling during the event as well.

The LGBTQ Resource Center was selling pride goodie bags and showing students new library books that they could check out.

“We are hoping to get more people into the resource center and expose our library,” public relations junior Faith Oom said.

The center was hoping to engage with students, spread awareness and show a fun side of the LGBTQ Resource Center. They were joined by tables from the Center of Latin@ Studies and the Office of Multicultural Student Services.

“We were focusing on different cultures,” criminal justice junior Faile said. “The Center for Latin@ Studies and the LGBTQ Resource [Center] were here. We wanted everyone to be here and have fun. This is also to help the RSOs more. They are selling stuff so they can get more money, and reach more students and have more fun with students.”

The students embraced the opportunity to dress up in costumes and socialize in the David L. Eisler Center ballroom. Many only heard about the event through word of mouth but were pleasantly surprised at the types of activities that Ferris-Con was featuring.

“I hadn’t heard of [the] RHA until this event,” television and

digital media freshman Liz Brown said. “I came for fun, nerdy stuff and also friends, and it is exactly what I expected. I will probably go to the next one.”

“I like that the LGBTQ resource table was here,” criminal justice freshman Max Sorek said. “I associate doing cosplay with gay culture, and I know a lot of gay people who do cosplay.”

By collaborating with the OMSS, CLS and DAISE, the revived RHA is forming a more robust presence on campus.

With a new e-board, president and renewed passion, the Residence Hall Association shows no sign of slowing down. Keep an eye out for their Stuff-a-Plush event scheduled the week before finals.

## Asbestos removal in Puterbaugh Hall

Meghan Hartley  
News Reporter

After signs of asbestos removal were posted on the doors of Miller and Puterbaugh Hall, students became worried about their own halls.

Asbestos, a naturally occurring fibrous silicate mineral, can be a dangerous element if exposed to for a long period of time.

History senior Riley Sherman is a residential advisor at Puterbaugh Hall and says he heard rumors of asbestos being in the walls of the lobby at the beginning of the year but didn’t believe any of them until two weeks ago.

“One of my co-workers was working at the front desk one day,” Sherman said. “She texted me and told me that a bunch of maintenance workers were coming in and out, but she wasn’t sure why. As

I came back to the building from class later that day, I saw on the door to the building that they had posted a removed sign that they were removing asbestos on that day. Besides that, we were never really told anything about it.”

The removal happened on March 15, but maintenance only removed asbestos from one resident’s room instead of the whole building. Sherman says the area maintenance worked in was not the area he was told they had asbestos in.

“Admittedly I was not too shocked,” Sherman said. “We have a very old building here, and although it did kind of make me nervous in the sense of who knows where it all is and how much there is, it really didn’t shock me much that we still have asbestos... I’ve heard in past years that they have it in other buildings as well.”

Director of Housing and Residence Life Lisa Ortiz says asbestos is in every building on campus, from residence halls to academic buildings. Ortiz says students shouldn’t worry, as asbestos isn’t dangerous unless someone is doing construction and drilling into the walls.

Coordinator of Housing Facilities Greg Eichenberg says he was a custodian for ten years and had training on asbestos every year. He learned that the material is not harmful until it turns into a dust form.

“It’s in everything,” Eichenberg said. “A lot of places in the ‘60s and ‘70s [used it]. It’s a great insulator and fire protector... There’s no point in taking it out and wasting the money to do that until it’s needed.”

Ortiz and Eichenberg said it is expensive to remove asbestos and

to only remove it when an incident occurs. In regards to the incident at Puterbaugh, Eichenberg says a resident found a leak in their room and called for facilities management.

“Facilities looked at it, and in order to fix the leak, they had to take out a ball cap. Before they can take that ball cap out, they had a test for asbestos,” Eichenberg said. “It came back that it was positive for asbestos. They brought in the abatement crew that was over at Miller Hall. They came over, evaded the area that needed to be evaded, and then they were able to fix the pipe.”

The resident temporarily had to leave their room but was able to return a few hours later, as it didn’t take too long to correct the issue. Miller Hall is being prepared to undergo construction to be updated, and the first step in that prepara-

tion was to test for asbestos before it turns into dust due to drilling. According to Eichenberg, the process of testing and removing material in the lobby, upper lobby and a few rooms took two weeks to complete.

Ortiz says it is more cost-effective to remove any asbestos from a single room rather than an entire floor or building and that maintenance workers do their due diligence in making sure everyone is safe in campus buildings.

Ortiz and Eichenberg both agree there is no danger to students living in the residence halls, and if students still have questions or concerns about asbestos, they should call housing for more information.

# Migrant Legal Aid workers 'fight the good fight'



Photo by: Evan Hibbard | Freelance Photographer

Elizabeth Arreola (left), Molly Spaak (center) and Teresa Hendricks (right) visited Ferris' Center for Latin@ Studies to discuss Migrant Legal Aid.

**Jonathen Hart**  
News Reporter

The Center for Latin@ Studies teamed up with Teresa Hendricks, Elizabeth Arreola and Molly Spaak from Migrant Legal Aid Grand Rapids to give students more of an understanding of what Migrant Aid is and what they do.

This panel was titled "Migrant Worker Rights: Fighting the Good Fight." This event took place on Wednesday, March 29, in the IRC building.

Twenty-eight students from different backgrounds came to this panel to ask questions and learn more about migrant workers and how they are treated and helped.

The Migrant Legal Aid website describes its operations as an organization that fights for migrant

rights.

"Migrant Legal Aid is a nonprofit organization that has been fighting for migrant workers' rights since 1973. The organization changed its name from Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project to Migrant Legal Aid to better reflect our mission and values."

Hendricks, the executive director at Migrant Aid, was the moderator for this event. She asked questions to Arreola, their education and outlook director, and Spaak, one of their attorneys.

Arreola believes they do "a little bit of everything" in hopes that they can reach out and help as many migrant workers as possible.

"Our goal is mainly to help people with their legal matters," Arreola said. "But I like to say that we do a little bit of everything. We do a

lot of social services and referrals to other organizations. So a lot of the time we'll get phone calls from people who maybe aren't eligible for our services or we don't have the services that they are looking for. We just refer them to trusted community partners that we know will handle them appropriately."

Arreola also talked about how they are able to reach out to people when some migrant workers don't have the time or the means to have transportation to go out and see them themselves.

"Primarily, the way we advertise our services to our farmworker community is through outreach," Arreola said. "We hop in a van and go up to the migrant housing sites across Michigan and talk to them about the services that we offer."

Arreola mentioned that they give

the workers packets that contain information they might need, including their rights, what they can offer and different numbers to call if they need help.

Spaak spoke about how poor the migrant housing was and how different it is from what we might think or know as a home.

"The migrant housing is very poor and worn down," Spaak said. "Most times they're used to housing migrant and seasonal farmworkers for the amount of time that they're working, so they're often not being kept and a lot of the time are just in very poor condition. So when we do outreach, part of our mission is to inform them of these services, but it's also to do housing inspections because they're not being inspected appropriately."

Spaak also talked about the fact that there are only seven inspectors for these housing units throughout Michigan. None of these inspectors speak any Spanish, which makes it hard to be able to communicate with the people in these homes and see what needs to be done properly.

The panel as a whole also agreed that most of the time these homes aren't safe to live in. Especially when you have 50-100 people crammed into just a few homes.

This panel was a way to learn more about migrant workers and what they go through but also what kind of help they receive through Migrant Legal Aid.

## The Ferris State Torch

### Corrections

**For Mr. Pharmacy pageant released on March 22**

We incorrectly identified Scott Sexton solely as a professor in last month's coverage of the Mr. Pharmacy pageant. His correct title is Dr. Scott Sexton.

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# APRIL EVENT CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Gwen Frostic: Art and Nature in Michigan Fine Art Gallery			Mid-term Recess		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		<b>Literature in Person Poet:</b> Brandon Rushton Fine Art Gallery 5pm-6pm  <b>The Big Event Kickoff</b> Robinson Quad 4pm-7pm	<b>One Day for Dawgs</b> Campuswide <b>Concert Choir</b> <b>Spring Concert</b> Williams Auditorium 7:30 pm-9pm	<b>Spring Bill Due</b>		<b>Jazz Band and Alumni Concert</b> Williams Auditorium 7pm-8pm
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<b>Last Day to "W"</b>						<b>The Big Event</b> IRC parking lot 11am
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
<b>International Festival of Cultures</b> DEC 202 1pm-5pm <b>Spring Band and Orchestra Concert</b> 4pm-5:30pm				<b>Spring Fling</b> Robinson Quad 12pm-5pm	<b>Last day of Classes</b>	
30						
<b>Multicultural Graduate Recognition Program</b> DEC Ballroom 11am-1pm						

## MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

Jessica Oakes  
News Editor

The Grand Rapids Police Department is moving plans forward to begin the use of drones.

WOOD-TV reports that GRPD Police Chief Eric Winstrom believes the city is "late to the party" on drones, as other, smaller departments have already implemented them.

Last Tuesday, Winstrom pitched his \$100,000 plan to the Grand Rapids City Commission's Public Safety Committee. It involves the purchase of six drones and the training of roughly 10 police officers.

To sell his pitch, Winstrom listed the drones' uses, including locating hidden suspects or children lost in the woods. He also cited a current police staffing issue, stating that drones could help get officers "back on the street answering vital 911 calls."

Winstrom assured the public that the drones are not to be used in surveillance. Still, critics are uneasy about a potential invasion of privacy.

"We're not in support of surveillance technology. But we know that these things have been here ... they're already here," Greater Grand Rapids NAACP President Cle Jackson said to WOOD-TV.

Winstrom is confident that Grand Rapids community members will have their questions answered in time for a final decision to be made following his pitch.

"There's a lot of common sense in this town," Winstrom said. "When it comes down to it, and when you really understand what we're going to be doing with these drones and how that's going to benefit the people of Grand Rapids, I think the city's going to come together and say, 'Yeah, it's probably about time we utilize this technology for the benefit of the city.'"

MLive reports that the City Commission will approve or deny plans for a public hearing regarding drones on April 11.

## GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

Jessica Oakes  
News Editor

Former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson announced his 2024 presidential bid on Sunday, telling Washington Post that it is "time for different leadership" in the GOP.

Joining recently indicted Donald Trump and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley in the Republican race, Hutchinson first made his informal announcement in an interview on ABC This Week with Jon Karl.

"I'm convinced that people want leaders that appeal to the best of America and not simply appeal to our worst instincts," Hutchinson said.

Hutchinson believes his consistent brand of conservatism is appealing to Americans in a particularly "unpredictable" political climate. Former President Trump's recent indictment, Hutchinson said, only adds to the "unpredictability."

He expressed the belief that Trump should not be the next president soon after the news broke on Thursday afternoon, echoing his previous statement that Trump should be disqualified from the

race following the Jan. 6 insurrection attempt.

Despite this, Hutchinson describes himself as "non-Trump" rather than "anti-Trump".

"I want to be able to speak to the Trump voters," Hutchinson said. "I want to be able to speak to all of the party and say, 'This is the leadership that I want to provide, and I think that we need to have border security. I think we need to have a strong America; we need to spend less at the federal level.' These are the values that I represent."

Hutchinson is planning a formal campaign announcement later in the month of April from Bentonville, Arkansas.



# Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

## MCO hosts second talent show

Michigan College of Optometry celebrates second annual talent show



Photo by: Maddie Epps | Torch Photographer

**Marilyn Johnson and Stephanie Mathews dancing together at the MCO talent show.**



Photo by: Maddie Epps | Torch Photographer

**Host Dr. Paula McDowell addressing the audience at the MCO talent show.**

**Blase Gapinski**  
*Freelance Reporter*

Michigan College of Optometry students and faculty came together to share their talents with one another all in support of diversifying the optometric field.

On Saturday, April 1, the MCO and the National Optometric Student Association hosted their second annual talent show to bring the program closer together, as well as bring attention to diversifying healthcare and recruiting minorities into the optometric field.

To align with these goals, the MCO and NOSA gave all donations received from the event to the Black Eye Care Perspective, which is another organization that works towards diversifying optometry.

The talent show featured the diverse aspects of each member of the MCO. There was singing, dancing, music from various instruments, stand up comedy, a magic show and even spoken word poetry.

NOSA President and second year optometry student Marilyn Johnson coordinated this event and came up with the original idea for a talent show last year.

“I really wanted an event that was different and brought out the talents of all my classmates and faculty,” Johnson said. “Because we are a graduate program and heavily medically focused, we are always buried in our books. We

rarely have time to go out and do fun things. I know so many of my classmates have awesome talents, so I figured why not have a stage to showcase them.”

Johnson, who has a history with dancing, performed an Indian dance routine with her partner, Stephanie Mathews, to express their culture.

“I am really proud of my Indian culture, and NOSA’s main goals are diversifying optometry and recruiting minority populations to the optometric field,” Johnson said. “I feel like really showcasing the diversity our school has is important.”

Johnson planned the event and even recruited each of the performers. According to Johnson, this weekend was the best time for the MCO to host this event because it acted as a break for each of the students.

“The third years have taken their national board exams, and the first and second years just finished some serious hell weeks of school,” Johnson said. “We all have the weekend off, so it’s the perfect time for everyone.”

Chief of Pediatrics and NOSA Advisor Paula McDowell was once again the show’s hostess. She was impressed by each one of the performers that went onstage.

This event gave professors the opportunity to see their student’s nonacademic talents first hand.

“We obviously see them in the

classroom and how talented they are, but it’s really amazing and such a proud moment to see our students up there and doing something that they love that is different than the school work they do every day in the classroom,” McDowell said.

McDowell emphasized why an event like this is important for NOSA and for strengthening the relationships of the MCO community. She believes that being a part of a small college helps the faculty

want to support their students.

“From the faculty side, showing up to these types of events just shows we have a really good relationship with our students,” McDowell said. “From the advisor perspective, showcasing what NOSA does and showing that we are making an effort to recruit a diverse student body are both great reasons to hopefully continue this event in future years.”

Students were not the only ones to perform. Daniel Taylor, the

MCO’s interim dean, also made an appearance on the stage as the opening act. He and his wife, Micah Taylor, performed a duet of Cole Porter’s “You’re the Top” from the 1934 musical “Anything Goes.”

Even though there were some technical difficulties during their act, Taylor described the room as “warm” because the audience

**MCO**  
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# Stepping into the lives of historical women

Learn more about the ‘Hidden Figures’ living wax museum

Harmony Goodman  
Freelance Reporter

In support of Women’s History Month, the Office of Multicultural Student Services brought important women to life during the living wax museum.

At the David Eisler Center in room 217 at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, March 28, the “Hidden Figures” living wax museum opened its doors to the Ferris community. The event itself is not a new idea, in years past the event has been held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. This year the OMSS was able to host the event in person for a more one-on-one experience.

With the help of students and staff, the audience was able to go around the room from actor to actor and hear about the important women of history. A few of the wax figures even had props to add more realism to the event. The room was full of support from

the audience, who took pictures of the actors while cheering them on during their speeches.

Fourth year sports communications major Isaias Rivera was one of the first to arrive at the event. He decided to attend to show his support for Women’s History Month and the OMSS. Rivera is also the president of Ferris’ chapter of Sigma Lambda Beta, Inc. He feels the OMSS has provided their fraternity with many resources and has welcomed them with “open arms.”

“History is always going to be there, so why bury it? I think it’s important to know where people came from [starting with] humble beginnings to learn more and educate yourself,” Rivera said.

While the audience members made their laps around the event, actresses spent time reciting their speeches about these influential women that are frequently mentioned in history lessons.

Healthcare administration and biology junior Nina King-Barber played the role of Dorothy Vaughan. Her speech discussed how Vaughan was one of the first African American women to work for NASA. Her speech highlighted Vaughan’s achievements, including her management position at NASA.

“I relate to [Vaughan] in many ways,” King-Barber said. “From being a person of color, to knowing what it’s like to be the only... person of color in a room full of all white men.”

During her speech, King-Barber put a heavy emphasis on the fact that all of Vaughan’s achievements and contributions to NASA went unrecognized until after she passed away in 2008. And even then she wasn’t well known to the public until the movie “Hidden Figures” came out in 2016.

“For her in the 1950s and 1960s to not only be giving her

opinion but also not feel respected and valued for those opinions,” King-Barber said. “If it would’ve been a white male or even a white woman it would have been taken more seriously.”

Dental hygiene and Spanish senior Alondra Campos was inspired to join this event as a way to raise awareness in the Ferris community. Campos played the role of Sylvia Mendez, an American civil rights activist of Mexican and Puerto Rican descent.

“I come from a Latina background who also came from a lower income household,” Campos said. “The struggles her family went through to support themselves reminds me a lot of what my mother had to do to support us.”

Campos feels that sharing Mendez’s story is incredibly important.

“Sylvia’s story is very impactful and most definitely helped pave the way to end segregation in

schools, which is why we are so fortunate to be able to have the same equal opportunity to attend any school no matter what color your skin is,” Campos said.

As a representative of the Gamma Phi Omega International Sorority, Inc., she focuses on advocating for cultural representation and diversity awareness. Campos is also proud to say that Mendez is an honorary member of Gamma Phi Omega International Sorority, Inc.

For Campos, the real value comes from sharing these stories because of the impact they have had.

“Everyone has a story, but these individuals represent more than just their story,” Campos said. “Their actions helped create change and to honor diversity, inclusion and equity. Each of these women has left such an impactful imprint that paved the way for future leaders and hope in society.”

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## MCO

Continued from page 5

remained supportive. He enjoyed being on stage with his wife and being able to laugh along with the audience as they performed.

“Everybody knew we were just out here trying to have a good time, so I felt really supported, and at the end I think everybody else enjoyed it as well,” Taylor said.

Taylor knows all too well how hard MCO students work and enjoyed being able to see them in a new light. He believes the event is good for “comaraderie.”

“Everybody gets a chance to come out and show a side of them that you don’t see a lot of times in a program like ours, where you’re just so busy all the time studying,” Taylor said. “You get to really see the lives of other people, what they are interested in and what moves them, and that’s just the best part of it all.”

Taylor believes expressing students’ and faculty’s diverse backgrounds is what connects everyone.

“We begin to understand our differences but also that common unity,” Taylor said. “That thread that runs through everything we are doing that helps bring us together. People are creative and awesome, and MCO students are no exception.”

Third year optometry student Marino Markho had the audience immersed with his stand up comedy act. He even called members from the crowd onstage to receive a ridiculous prize after laughing at his jokes. The closeness between him and his classmates is what made it easier for Markho to perform.

“My teachers and classmates

are some of the best people I’ve ever met, and I’m really comfortable with them,” Markho said. “I was glad to go up there and make them laugh and be able to share that laugh with them.”

After going through a long period of studying, Markho was relieved to finally be able to spend quality time with his peers. He was able to rest and unwind while having a good time with his peers for a good cause.

Third year optometry student Leah Jipping also captivated the audience by performing her spoken word poem about the stress students experience when it comes to identifying themselves.

Unlike most people, Jipping enjoys public speaking. She enjoyed getting to express her emotions with people who understand and feel the same way. This experience gave her a thrill and sparked more ideas, and she is looking forward to performing in the future.

Jipping believes this event is the best fit for NOSA, as it truly highlights everyone’s differences. Jipping hopes to see the event continue onward.

“All of our experiences are unique, so for NOSA to highlight those uniqueness within everyone on a public display is just wonderful to see,” Jipping said. “I’m really glad they started this event last year, and I’m excited to see where it ends up.”

As the performers took their final bows, the audience could no longer contain their energy. They cheered and showed admiration for their friends, family and fellow peers as the second annual MCO talent show came to an end.

# 31st on the 31st

YBBW celebrates their 31st annual fashion show



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Multimedia Editor

The 31st YBBW fashion show theme was “seasons.” Models walked the runway showing off different outfits for their scenes.

**Giuliana Denicolo**  
Culture Editor

Williams Auditorium filled with 100 guests, bright colorful lights, loud music and dressed-up members of You Beautiful Black Woman to commemorate their 31st annual fashion show “seasons” on March 31.

Special guest star Pretty Brayah, on whom a considerable portion of the budget was spent, canceled the day before the show. YBBW members moved quickly to find her replacement but remained “business as usual,” as YBBW President Jaime Maximore said. They persevered through the challenge and invited their founder, Terri Houston, to give a speech instead.

The crowd loudly cheered as Houston walked up on the stage. She referred to the audience as her “brothers and sisters” and talked briefly about YBBW history, Black history, current events and a YBBW scholarship.

Houston was Ferris’ director of student activities in 1990, which is when her idea of YBBW flourished. She described her invitation to the show as “humbling,” and there was absolutely “no hesitation” in making her decision to attend.

“You know, people seem to think this started because of me,” Houston said. “And it did not, it started because I was fortunate to have an idea at a time, and it grew because of the students’ leadership and the vision, and I cannot take the credit.”

The fashion show is a tradition meant to give YBBW members a way to display their inner and outer beauty through their clothes and personal style.

“Fashion shows in the history of anybody’s legacy or past represent a way to showcase your beauty,” Houston said. “Well, that’s in our mantra, that is who we are as beautiful women.”

Social work junior Keonie Thomas-Russell does public relations work for YBBW. While planning the show, she decided on the theme

of seasons. This was a theme she always thought would work in a fashion show because of how versatile the outfits are when entering a new season.

She strongly believes in displaying individuality through fashion. Her creative direction was swayed by her urge to make sure everyone was comfortable in their outfits.

“I feel like seasons are a great way to showcase fashion because every season you’re wearing something different,” Thomas-Russell said. “I’m all about being comfortable in your own skin and being confident enough to showcase your own individuality.”

Each session was named after the four seasons and consisted of six to ten looks. The models dressed up in their best fall, spring, summer and winter attire and strutted down the stage.

Thomas-Russell did a lot of pre-planning to make it easier for her future self. Leading up to the show, she felt a lot of anticipation because of how much she wanted everything to run smoothly. However, she described the planning process as a “breeze.”

Maximore, a dental hygiene senior, had a small part in planning, saying she believes Thomas-Russell did “all of the legwork.” To her, chaos is the recipe for a “perfect show” because everything ended up going exactly how she wanted it to.

“Honestly, I want to say with her planning skills, everything went by a lot smoother than it would have been if somebody else had done [it],” Maximore said.

Criminal justice student Miracle Gray came to support YBBW and was happy to see everyone else there to show their support as well. To her, the show was “amazing” because of how much she loved all the outfits and how “beautiful” she thought everyone looked.

Throughout the years, YBBW has expanded to four other chapters. Members from Grand Valley State, the beta chapter, also came to show support for their sisters.

Parents Brian and Kesha Rob-

inson described the show as creative, constructive, encouraging and uplifting. They believed that the show was a good way for YBBW members to come together and “bring light to Black women.”

As a Ferris alumna, Houston wanted to give a “thank you to

Ferris State University” for giving her the opportunity to serve as the director of minority affairs and as the director of student activities because that’s where it all started.

“Through that process, the whole opportunity and vision came to fruition,” Houston said. “It was

through leadership affairs, it was through visionary of amazing students back in the day and it is because of the community that rally behind the idea of what YBBW stands for.”

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# Opinions

Dylan Rider | Opinions Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

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## EDITORS COLUMN:

# A. eye.

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

Only a few short years ago, if you suffered from a severe visual impairment or were totally blind, all you had to rely on were an onslaught of analog and “dumb” digital tools to hodgepodge together and live your life.

Today, a camera no bigger than a thumb drive can be mounted to the side of any pair of glasses and guide its user through the world surrounding them, all thanks to AI. While AI has been used in some digital accessibility tools in the past, like to harvest text out of photos, the OrCam MyEye that was demoed for me and the AI-driven updates to the Be My Eyes app changes everything for the blind and visually impaired.

I suffer from a degenerative eye disorder that will one day, hopefully in the very distant future, fully

take my sight. This used to feel like a death sentence to me, but with technology progressing this quickly and this far in advance, I worry far less.

The MyEye handles issues I've feared since I understood what exactly I was dealing with. Like the fact that there's no physical way to distinguish paper US currency, or even how to plan an outfit while I'm alone. This device helps take the guesswork out of life. Most importantly, it gives a person with a visual disability so much independence.

Being able to identify text simply by pointing at it, people by their faces, currency by looking at it, clothing by holding it or products by their barcode or physical appearance, the MyEye feels like an artificial eye that can still walk you through the world just by its word. The main shortcoming of this device that packs a camera,

processor, battery, speaker and touch controls all into a package about the size of a Bic lighter? Its \$4,000 price tag.

That's where Be My Eyes comes in to fill in the gaps until the stand-alone technology becomes more cost-effective. At CSUN 2023, an accessibility technology conference, Be My Eyes announced Virtual Volunteer, a service powered by ChatGPT 4 that can do everything from identifying food in your fridge, to guiding you to things through landmarks in your photo.

Youtuber Lucy Edwards did a series of ads for Virtual Volunteer, showing off its capabilities in her everyday life. This AI was able to replace an entire guide person and give her so much of her autonomy back through a simple photo and a one-line question. The best part? Once out of beta, all you need is the cellphone you already have. The barriers to entry here are so

minimal for such a massive quality of life improvement.

I'm used to seeing accessibility tech advance with such a painful slowness. But with such wide-ranging applications, AI has made leaps in months, when before advancements like decent screen readers took years. I can't wait to see what's to come in the years to follow, and I dream for the day that we could possibly feed these tools video, or even live stream it, to get information even quicker.

While I hopefully won't need to rely on these tools for several more years, I'm awestruck with all the progress being made now. I can't even begin to imagine what will be available and easily accessible when the time does come that I need these aids. I'm in no rush to need them, but I no longer fear the inevitable because of them.

# Representing something bigger

## Ferris goaltender Logan Stein reflects on what it means to be a student athlete

**Logan Stein**  
*Torch Guest Writer*

When you are a division one athlete, you are under a microscope whether you are aware of it or not.

You are expected to represent your university and your program with the utmost integrity. In the era of social media, everything you do and say can be seen by the entire world. So, every decision you make on and off the ice must be calculated because your decisions affect you and your university.

Carson Briere, son of Philadelphia Flyers general manager Daniel Briere, is a hockey player at Mercyhurst University who pushed a woman's wheelchair down a flight of stairs at a bar in Erie, Pennsylvania, back in March. Carson is now being charged with criminal mischief and disorderly conduct. Following the incident, Carson issued an apology statement.

These types of incidents, where athletes are getting in trouble with the law, are far too common in collegiate athletics. If you listen, watch or read the news on college

athletics, there is almost always a story about an athlete getting in trouble with the law.

There are a lot of temptations and distractions in college, and it can be very hard for college athletes to stay on a straight and narrow path. Student athletes have a lot going on with school and their sport, and sometimes they let loose. But it is important to remember that you're still representing something much larger than yourself when you let loose.

As a fellow division one hockey player, you hate to see incidents like this in the news because it hurts people's views on hockey culture and on division one athletes. It's obvious to realize what Carson did was wrong, and based on his statement he seems to know it too. This incident is a learning experience for him and for other hockey players and athletes around the country.

As a student athlete for Ferris State, this is the microscope I speak of. We student athletes must realize that we are representing something much bigger than ourselves. We are representing our



Photo by: Dylan Rider | Opinions Editor

**Logan Stein looks down the ice in a game against Lake Superior State**

family, our teammates, our coaches and, most important of all, our university.

You never want to put a stain on the university due to incidents that occur off the ice, field or court. Our goal should be to uplift our team and university to new heights and leave this place better than we found it.

Everyone makes mistakes, and what Carson did was a big mistake. I would hate to see a lapse of judgement end his collegiate hockey career, but in the world

we live in, your actions can result in your privileges being stripped away from you at any moment. Every action you take can move you forward or set you back, and you must be able to make smart decisions because they will affect your future.

As student athletes, we must learn from Carson's mistake. We must understand that our actions affect things much more than us as an individual, and we want to make sure we represent our university in the best way possible.



# ‘I could never give up meat’

## Give a second thought to the meat you eat

Jasmine Baar  
Culture Reporter

Do you ever question the meat you eat? Have you ever felt so gross after eating meat that you considered not eating it? If you have, then you are like me. To save you time on Google, here's the rundown.

Many people don't know that there are different kinds of vegetarians. Lacto-vegetarian diets exclude meat, fish, poultry and eggs. Ovo-vegetarian diets exclude meat, poultry, seafood and dairy products but allow eggs. Then, most commonly, there are lacto-ovo vegetarian diets that exclude meat, fish and poultry but allow dairy products and eggs.

The vegan diet typically gets thrown in that mix, and most vegetarians are generalized within veganism, which is abstaining from the consumption and use of all animal products. Veganism is more extreme than vegetarianism.

There are many reasons a person could choose one of these diets. I think a huge factor all vegetarians agree on is the impact meat has on the environment. The meat industry contributes to climate change by producing tremendous amounts of methane and carbon dioxide.

People could choose a vegetarian lifestyle for ethical concerns too. Factory farms are not an ideal life for most of the livestock. Animals are often confined in disease-ridden, cramped cages that are stacked on top of each other.

There are many more reasons why a person might choose a vegetarian lifestyle. If you already are or plan to become a vegetarian, prepare to be asked “why” a lot.

I've been plant based for four years now. I stopped eating beef and pork first. This was hardest on my dad, who'd rather lose an arm than give up steak. It was easier saying goodbye to chicken than I thought. Although Chick-

Fil-A always tempts me, the last meat dinner I can remember eating was beef rib. As I was pulling animal flesh off of a rib bone that was once inside a living creature, I remember thinking, “Wow, this is disgusting and kind of weird.”

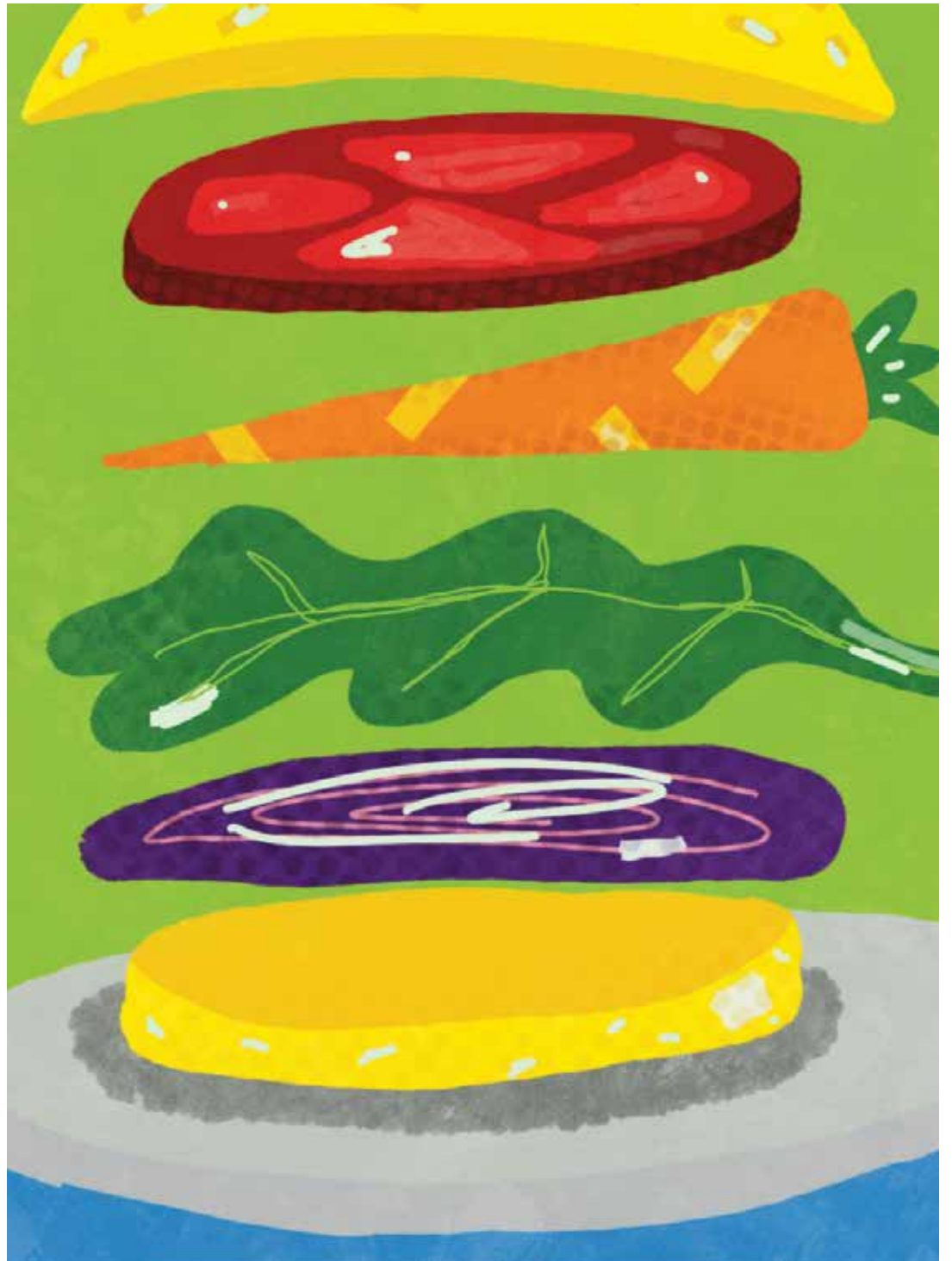
In spite of that, even after four years, I still have dreams of salami. Now you're probably reading this thinking that it's strange to miss deli meat over bacon or burgers. However, I have a deep rooted love for salami sandwiches, and there's no good vegetarian alternative.

Although I have gotten skilled at making all my favorite meals vegetarian friendly, there is a downside to this lifestyle: meat substitutes are often more expensive than meat. For me, it is worth it.

There's no shortage of comments plant based people get about insufficient nutrients. My mom asks me at least once a week about what I ate that had protein and if I'm getting enough iron. I will say, as a college student I'm not the greatest at building a well balanced diet, but I always make sure to eat my veggies, beans and nuts. Obviously taking vitamins should be a huge part of every vegetarian's life, but it's important to remember that we can still get the nutrients we need from food. Tofu, chickpeas and quinoa are all good examples of diverse, high protein foods.

Being a vegetarian in Big Rapids has been challenging. All of the “best places to eat in town” have only one option for vegetarians if we're lucky, which is typically a veggie burger. Some restaurants offer plant based chicken wings or sandwiches.

My guide for the best veggie burgers in Big Rapids in order from best to okay goes The Gypsy Nickel, Schubergs, Culvers and then Crankers. Honorable mentions for The Rock and The Quad, they try. The Gypsy Nickel has a few vegetarian options, so it is my go to. Hands down, Qdoba has the best



Graphic by: Sienna Parmelee | Production Manager

impossible beef for burritos or nachos. Chains like Subway, Jimmy Johns and, sadly my favorite, Mancinos are lacking in variety for vegetarians. The only obstacle with pizza is talking your group into toppings that aren't meat, and there

are no Hot-N-Ready cheese pizzas. Ultimately, Big Rapids needs more restaurants that cater to people that don't eat meat.

At the end of the day, don't let the fact that we're in a small town deter you from trying something

new. If you've ever questioned meat, you should oblige your curiosities and do your own research. Possibly try a few popular vegetarian meals and fall in love. You might find that you'll feel better than you ever have.

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# Sports

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

## Record setting players to return



Photo by: Evan Hibbard | Torch Photographer

Chloe Idoni shoots a free throw while Mallory McCartney looks on during Ferris' 80-71 loss to Saginaw Valley on Feb. 11. Idoni recorded her 1000th career point this season, and McCartney tallied her 1000th career assist. Both senior players will return to the Bulldogs next year.

### Women's basketball seniors Idoni and McCartney to come back next year

Joseph Nagy  
Sports Reporter

The Bulldogs' late season push wasn't enough to keep their playing hopes alive, but with impact seniors Chloe Idoni and Mallory McCartney set to return, the future remains promising.

With a 68-57 loss in the conference tournament semi-final, Ferris finished the season at 17-12, placing them above .500 for the second year in a row under head coach Kurt Westendorp. Additionally, Idoni, McCartney and junior DeShonna Day earned all conference honors. Idoni also achieved the status of Academic All-American.

"I was blessed to have made the All-Region and All-American team," Idoni said. "Unfortunately, I did not get the GLIAC player of the year,

but that just gives me something to strive for next year."

The 2022-23 season saw the Bulldogs jump to a hot 8-2 start, competing with top level regional opponents throughout the year. However, a short mid schedule slump slowed their momentum, which proved especially detrimental in a time where the GLIAC was more wide open than most people thought.

The Bulldogs recorded three wins in five games to close out the season, knocking off higher seeded Wisconsin-Parkside in the opening round of the conference playoffs, but a Michigan Tech team, who was riding a five game win streak, was just too much for the team to handle.

It was a season of personal milestones for many of the Bulldogs on this team. Idoni found her-

self crossing the 1,000 point milestone halfway through the year against Wayne State, cementing herself as one of the more dominant scorers in school history and across the league. Near the end of the season, McCartney notched her 1,000 career assist in just four years. The pair of seniors became a deadly duo in each contest this year.

McCartney was a league leader, averaging 5.6 assists per game, while Idoni nearly averaged a double double with 19 points and seven rebounds per game.

"Being able to play with [Idoni] has been the highlight of my time here," McCartney said. "We were able to do a lot this year, but we're both ready to win another championship with this team."

Nearing 20 wins, it still seemed as if this was a down year for the

women's basketball team. Losing one of the conferences best players in Kady Blanchard and having a more depleted number of reserves, the team can breathe a sigh of relief as everyone is eligible to make a return for the 2023-24 campaign.

Averaging 70 points a game as a team and putting away 40% of field goals, performances by many of the players offers a chance for further improvement in this upcoming off-season. Sophomore Grace Sullivan appeared in 29 games this season and had a handful of games in double digit points, which was a valuable asset in the second half of this season. Much of the same comes from Elle Irwin, the freshman who started in nearly all contests this season and came up with an average of seven points per game.

The Bulldogs had a team average of 36 rebounds each game, building on second chance points. The team shot 75% from the charity stripe and a respectable 30% from the 30-point line.

"Looking back on the season, I am proud of the team for understanding the assignments of those successful games and keying in on the details as a team to be able to pull off these wins," Idoni said. "It comes down to consistency and working hard, which is something that I see in the younger players on the team."

A strong set of returners for next season as well as developed new recruits means another successful year of Ferris women's basketball.

### SCORECARD

#### Men's Golf

March 27 & 28 - Tied seventh place finish at Findlay Spring Invite

#### Women's Tennis

March 31 - Purdue NW 4, Ferris 3

April 1 - Ferris 5, Davenport 2

#### Men's Tennis

March 31 - Ferris 6, Purdue NW 1

April 1 - Ferris 7, Davenport 0

# Tennis teams continue GLIAC play

## Women end losing streak, men continue dominant play

Joseph Nagy  
Sports Reporter

Finding themselves on a seven game losing streak, the Ferris women's tennis team got back on the right track with a win over Davenport last weekend.

The Bulldogs played host to both Purdue Northwest and Davenport on March 31 and April 1, respectively. While the men continued their dominance so far in the GLIAC, the women's team was able to get back in the win column with the weekend split.

It's been a tale of two seasons so far for the men's and women's tennis programs. After a tough Florida trip against some of the top tennis programs in the nation, it was a tough return to GLIAC play with two losses right out the gate for the women (7-9, 1-3 GLIAC). The men (11-3, 3-0 GLIAC) have continued their pursuit to remain at the top of the conference standings.

"Overall the season has been going great for both teams," head coach Mark Doren said. "The women are in a little bit of a skid right now, but that's just something based on scheduling that I did before the season."

In Friday's match, the women came out with a strong performance by getting the clean sweep in doubles over the Pride. Purdue Northwest pushed back in the singles, claiming four out of six to take the match. Ana Sofia Hernandez Ferrer won in three sets 6-3, 3-6 and 7-5. Her sister, Maria Hernandez Ferrer, won as well by default, as her opponent issued a walkover.

The men went 3-0 in the doubles portion and kept that momentum all throughout their match. With a final score of 5-1 with standout performances from Yannick Alexander Mader (6-1 and 6-2), Alessandro Santangelo (6-0 and 6-1) and Esunge Ndumbe (6-1 and 2-1), the men took care of the Pride.

Saturday brought a new test for both squads with Davenport. With the men focused on keeping the course before next weekend's big match with Grand Valley and the women attempting to end their seven game losing streak, staying focused was key for the Bulldogs. In a combined beatdown of 12-2 between the two teams, it was a sure confidence booster to close out the weekend.

"It was such a fun day on the

courts for Bulldog tennis," Doren said. "I'm very happy for the women's team, who snapped a losing streak against a good team."

A true showing of grit came from the women. Even with a loss of the doubles point, many players were able to redeem themselves from just a day prior. Morgan Waller won her match in 6-2 and 6-1, and Sophie Devautila came out swinging with 6-3 and 6-2 wins herself. The women claimed their first win since the spring break trip with a score of 5-2.

On the men's side, they fell in only one of the doubles matches and were able to push their way into a clean 6-0 performance for each of the singles matches. Freshman Kacper Pasielak got the call for the #6 single and earned his first collegiate win in three sets 7-5, 2-6 and 10-6.

Both teams will only have one game this upcoming weekend, where they will take on arch rival Grand Valley in another rendition of the famed Anchor-Bone Classic at the Premier Athletic Club in Grandville at 5:00 p.m. on April 8. The Lakers sit at first in the GLIAC for women and fourth for the men.



Photo by: Mariana Searl | Torch Photographer

Esunge Ndumbe plays a ball in Ferris' victory over Wayne State on March 31.



April 14<sup>th</sup>

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9:15am

Sanket Tonde

Sanket is a Character Artist with four years of experience in the industry and is currently working at Bluepoint Games. After graduating from Savannah College of Art and Design, he shipped his first AAA title, God of War Ragnarok, while working at Santa Monica Studio as an External Development Artist. His passion is to create memorable characters while thriving in this ever-evolving profession.



10:30am

Fuad Shamieh

Fuad Shamieh is a Senior Solutions Engineer at Triplelift, working to enable the future of CTV through advertising. He received his Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, Canada and was previously an Applications Engineer at Evertz Microsystems responsible for designing and deploying multimedia pipelines for broadcast providers.



11:45am

Lauren Stefl

2018 TDMP graduate Lauren Stefl is a freelance Videographer and Photographer currently focusing on sports coverage. Her work has led her to the National Women's Soccer League, FIFA Youth World Cups, and most recently the four-time Women's World Cup Champion United States Women's National Soccer Team where she provides creative coverage across a variety of visual mediums.



1:30pm

Chris Goosman

Chris Goosman is an audio professional from Ann Arbor, MI who is currently a Media Solutions Engineer at the University of Michigan Center for Academic Innovation, a mastering engineer who owns Baseline Audio Labs, and the resident sound designer for both the Croswell Opera House in Adrian, MI and the Encore Musical Theatre Company in Dexter, MI.



2:45pm

Justin Mayle

Justin Mayle is a seasoned artist and game industry veteran of over twelve years. He's worked on mobile, VR and AAA titles such as Farpoint, Life is Strange, and Destiny. He specializes in lighting and environment art and creating immersive worlds and experiences for players.

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# Young blood on the ice



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics.

Connor McGrath skates up the ice during Ferris' 6-2 loss to Bemidji on Feb. 11. McGrath was a key piece of the freshmen class this past season.

## How the freshmen class helped propel Bulldog hockey this year

Dylan Rider  
Opinions Editor

Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was Ferris hockey.

The program is still being built, but improvements from an 11-24-1 record in the 2021-22 season to a 14-19-4 record this season offers so much hope. With the conclusion of the season for the Bulldogs, they're showing a potential to be an even better team come next October.

One reason for this is the blossoming freshmen class brought in by the Bulldogs. The class is comprised of forwards Tyler Schleppe, Connor McGrath, Caiden Gault, Jacob Badal, defensemen Travis Shoudy and Andrew Noel and goaltender Joey Henson.

The class totaled 27 goals, 27 assists and 54 points in total. Leading the class was Schleppe and McGrath, who head coach Bob Daniels highlighted as players with "good offensive instincts" at the beginning of the season. Schleppe had a statline of 9G-6A-15P, while McGrath had 8G-6A-14P.

Even the young blueline put up points this year. Shoudy recorded 4G-7A-11P, and Noel recorded 2G-3A-5P.

However, not all freshmen Bulldogs were able to be completely lights out this year. Badal and Gault were slow to be impactful for the Bulldogs, although they did have their moments. Gault finished the season with 3G-4A-7P, and Badal finished with 1G-1A-2P. The one goal came from the Bulldogs' playoff series against the

Bowling Green Falcons.

"It's obviously frustrating not having the start you would like," Gault said. "It definitely affects your confidence, but you just have to keep working, focus on yourself and not worry about how good other guys are doing."

It's hard to write a player off after one collegiate season. The future is way too open for both Gault and Badal to accurately get a read on what they could become. Gault is a firm believer in this team and believe there are "good things" to look forward to with his class.

One thing that still must be examined for the Bulldogs is finding an offense with the talent they have. In the 2021-22 season, the Bulldogs scored 90 goals in 36 games played. This year, they scored 92 in 37. Without the 37th game, they would've been at the same amount of goals they had in 2021-22. They also ranked sixth this year in Goals-For in the CCHA.

As discussed by Daniels at the beginning of the season, the concern for scoring was there. He didn't believe the team had a "first line on a championship level team" and believed that the team would have to end up scoring by committee. In retrospect, this seems to have been the case.

However, with the young talent that was displayed by the freshman Bulldogs this year, there may be hope for a high-caliber machine of a line in the future. The fate of this team certainly rests in the development of the young players during their time as Bulldogs.

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LG. FAMILY COMBO

LG. 2-TOPPING & LG. 3-TOPPING ORIGINAL ROUND PIZZAS

Additional charges may apply for Thin, Deep Dish, or Stuffed Crust

**Hungry Howie's** Hungry Howie's Flavored Crust™ Pizza. All stores independently owned and operated. Prices & participation may vary. Delivery, taxes & additional toppings extra. Additional charges may apply. Coupon/code required at checkout. Limited time offer.

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PEPPERONI DUO™

LG. PIZZA WITH NEW CLASSIC CUPPED PEPPERONI™ AND REGULAR PEPPERONI

**Hungry Howie's** Hungry Howie's Flavored Crust™ Pizza. All stores independently owned and operated. Prices & participation may vary. Delivery, taxes & additional toppings extra. Additional charges may apply. Coupon/code required at checkout. Limited time offer.

**DOUGH MADE FRESH DAILY**

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**\$27.99**

FAMILY DEAL

2 LG. 2-TOPPING ORIGINAL ROUND PIZZAS & HOWIE BREAD™

Additional charges may apply for Thin, Deep Dish, or Stuffed Crust

**Hungry Howie's** Hungry Howie's Flavored Crust™ Pizza. All stores independently owned and operated. Prices & participation may vary. Delivery, taxes & additional toppings extra. Additional charges may apply. Coupon/code required at checkout. Limited time offer.

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