



# The Ferris State Torch

92 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

Week of Nov. 29 - Dec. 6

www.fsutorch.com

## Stalking reports doubled

Number of stalking incidents have doubled on the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report

### DPS Annual Security Fire and Safety Report

| On Campus Reports                     | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Dating Violence                       | 3    | 12   | 20   |
| Stalking                              | 14   | 20   | 55   |
| Drug Abuse<br>(Disciplinary Referral) | 7    | 31   | 15   |

Graphic: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

**Tate Zellman**  
News Reporter

Throughout the past year, the number of some on campus violations and reports have went up by close to or more than double including stalking and dating violence.

According to the FSU Annual Security and Fire Safety Report, the number of stalking incidents have more than doubled, going from 20 to 55 within the last year. The numbers in the reports represent whether a crime was reported committed. With these incidents occurring on campus, the victims have been Ferris community members.

Dean of Student Life Lina Blair stated a few reasons as to why the reporting numbers regarding stalking incidents have doubled.

“There are several reasons why reporting numbers would be different from year to year,” Blair said. “Often times, there’s a misconception that an increase in reporting numbers means an increase in policy violations on campus. Report numbers can increase due to things like increased staff trainings, student awareness of resources on campus and the perception that we will handle these concerns effectively.”

According to the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report, stalking is the only crime to have reported numbers more than double. Most other crimes have had reports go down. Within the last year, the other two types of crimes to have higher reports were dating violence (going from 12 to 20) and rape (going from 12 to 14).

The Anti-Violence Alliance offers items and information to students

across campus about different situations. In addition to this, they also help raise awareness about Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Violence Prevention Coordinator Sydney Mingori finds it important for students to learn about that month, as well as National Stalking Awareness Month so that students can be more mindful about potential attacks or incidents.

“The university supports the Anti-Violence Alliance, which provides resources to educate the campus community about stalking,” Mingori said. “Every January, we host programming for National Stalking Awareness Month and offer microprograms that teach students how to navigate rejection and recognize harmful behaviors.”

The microprograms include lectures and oral presentations covering secondary traumatic stress,

trauma, crisis management and other helpful topics.

In addition to talking about National Stalking Awareness Month, Mingori also finds it crucial that students are aware of the numbers, as well as the fact that stalking and other incidents can occur on campus.

“Understanding what is prevalent on our campus is crucial, and we must educate ourselves to be able to intervene in any potential harmful situations,” Mingori said. “Through education, we can create a positive change in our campus environment where survivors are heard, and perpetrators are held accountable.”

For students to feel safer on campus, they have the opportunity to reach out to resources easily available to them. David Murray, the associate vice president for marketing and communications,

was able to share some resources students could reach out to if they feel they’re a potential victim of a stalking incident.

“Every student should feel safe and secure on the Ferris State campus, and campus leaders are supportive of efforts to ensure this,” Murray said. “There is a growing awareness among students of stalking and the problem it causes. Students who believe they are victims of stalking can reach out to Resident Life staff or the office of the Dean of Student Life.”

In addition to Resident Life and the Dean of Student Life, Murray also mentioned the office of the Title IX Coordinator is another resource for students to reach out to. They can be reached at [titleix@ferris.edu](mailto:titleix@ferris.edu), or by calling 231-591-5916.

Environmental Awareness Month

starts on page 7

[torch@ferris.edu](mailto:torch@ferris.edu)  
231 591 5978

[www.fsutorch.com](http://www.fsutorch.com)



Like us on Facebook  
Ferris State Torch



Follow us on Twitter  
[@fsutorch](https://twitter.com/fsutorch)



Follow us on Instagram  
[@fsutorch](https://www.instagram.com/fsutorch)

# News

Ember St. Amour | News Editor | [stamoue@ferris.edu](mailto:stamoue@ferris.edu)

## Faculty contract discussions continue late in fall semester

### Associate provost and FFA president offer updates on the collective bargaining agreement

**Jessica Oakes**  
*Editor in Chief*

Five months after the expiration of the last collective bargaining agreement, Ferris' administration and faculty union are maintaining civil contract maintenance meetings.

Associate Provost Steve Reifert and Ferris Faculty Association president Charles Bacon both expect to sign a finalized, five-year contract by next semester.

**What is the current state of the new contract?**

**Reifert:** The contract's been ratified both by the union and by the Board of Trustees. There's a number of changes, and we call

them tentative agreements, to the language that we've made in the contract that we've agreed to. These are written down and signed both by the Ferris Faculty Association and myself.

**Bacon:** Ratified, not yet signed.

**How have contract discussions gone since the tentative agreement made in August?**

**Reifert:** As we've gone through this process, we've had tentative agreements way back in May. As we reach an agreement, we sign it [and] we can set it aside.

We all get very, very busy at the beginning of semester. We had to wait for the Board of Trustees vote, we had to wait for the faculty vote,

then the clerical work... It's been a mutually agreed upon process. We agreed on a date to sit down and go over this again. There's nothing negative about what's going on. And actually, I have wanted to do this the whole time, we just haven't been able to sit down and put it together.

**Bacon:** Very good. We've been solving most grievances.

**The goal was to finalize the new contract before the previous one expired in June. Did you expect to be continuing discussions in late November?**

**Reifert:** It took us three weeks longer than I thought, but that was

a scheduling issue.

**Bacon:** These ongoing discussions are more contract maintenance, as opposed to negotiations.

**What has been the most difficult element of contract discussions this semester?**

**Reifert:** Just trying to get together. We've had we have monthly contract maintenance meetings. We've discussed some of the larger changes we made, the impact those have had.

The most difficult part, as we saw with the [United Auto Workers] is always the wages. It is kind of relieving when we get to that point where we've agreed on what

wage increase will be. The union members vote and approve it, just like you've seen in the UAW, then the Board of Trustees voted and approved that.

**Bacon:** The changes made to promotion and merit have required new college committees which creates more questions from faculty and Deans.

**When do you expect to see the contract finalized and released?**

**Reifert:** Before the end of semester.

**Bacon:** Hopefully by the start of spring semester.

### Interested in guest writing?



Guest writing available for opinions and special editions

For more information contact us [torch@ferris.edu](mailto:torch@ferris.edu)

**OR**  
Contact our EIC Jessica Oakes [oakesj3@ferris.edu](mailto:oakesj3@ferris.edu)

## Ferris State Torch Corrections

**For the stories released on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> "Day of the Dead Ball," "Candlelight vigil brings awareness"**

The Torch incorrectly reported that the Day of the Dead Ball was hosted by its sponsor, the HLCC. Sigma Lambda Beta hosted, with help from the HSO, Sigma Lambda Gamma and CSI.

The Torch misidentified Tyler Chase as Tyler Chicks.

Corrections can be submitted through email at [fsutorcheditor@gmail.com](mailto:fsutorcheditor@gmail.com)

## MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

**Ember St. Amour**  
*News Editor*

Ann Arbor: A 12-year-old from Ann Arbor was arrested Saturday after leading the police on a chase.

The 12-year-old reportedly stole a Genie GTH-636 Telehandler, a construction vehicle with a forklift, from Forsyth Middle School around 6:45 p.m. and drove it down several streets according to MLive.

Police discovered later that the keys had been hidden inside the vehicle, which is how the boy was able to get ahold of them.

The boy did not turn on the headlights according to reports. Police vehicles began to follow the boy, and were going 15-20 mph. They also had their lights flashing and sirens on, as they pursued the vehicle.

While driving the vehicle, the 12-year-old reportedly ran into approximately 10 vehicles in the

Georgetown Boulevard Neighborhood, according to the Ann Arbor Police.

Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office deputies took over the pursuit after the vehicle was driven across the M-14 bridge, while on Nixon Road reported Fox 2 Detroit.

The chase ended around 8:00 p.m. when the boy stopped the vehicle on M-14 near Gotfredson Road and was taken into police custody. He was later taken to a juvenile detention center. The suspect's name has not been released yet. Police discovered later that the keys had been hidden inside the vehicle, which is how the boy was able to get ahold of them.

"This was a very dangerous situation that could've easily ended with serious injuries," police said in a social media statement. "The incident remains an active and ongoing criminal investigation."

## GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

**Ember St. Amour**  
*News Editor*

New Zealand: New Zealand's government announced plans to get rid of their smoke ban in order to fund tax cuts on Saturday.

The ban that was put in place with the previous government banned the sale of cigarettes to anyone born after 2008, starting in 2024 according to BBC News.

University of Otago tobacco control researcher and public health expert Professor Richard Edwards criticized the new bill.

"We are appalled and disgusted... this is an incredibly retrograde step on world-leading, absolutely excellent health measures," Edwards said.

The intention of the bill was to stop younger generations from smoking, as it is one of the leading causes of death in New Zealand.

**Finance Minister**

**Nicola Willis**

s p o k e a b o u t the change for the bill that came after a block to a partnership that would have helped fund tax cuts.

We have to remember that the changes to the Smokefree legislation had a significant impact on the government books, with about a billion dollars there," Willis said.

The laws still need to be appealed through parliament before they are no longer effective.



# Our Brother's Keeper receives donation

Ferris students help raise money for local shelter



Photo credits: Ember St. Amour | News Editor

The new location of Our Brothers Keeper Shelter in Big Rapids, next to the Big Rapids bowling alley.

**Tate Zellman**  
News Reporter

During early November, the Social Work Association held a fundraiser for the homeless shelter Our Brother's Keeper, in which people could come by and send support through donations.

OBK is located at 405 S. Third Avenue in Big Rapids. The shelter offers a dining area, sleeping rooms and other services for the homeless. The SWA hosted a couple bake sales in the Interdisciplinary Resource Center for people to bring in their donations to support OBK.

SWA's Vice President and social work senior Madalynn Brown found that it was important to set up the two-day bake sale during the holidays so that people who were in need could get into the holiday spirit.

"We identified this organization as one SWA would like to help because we know that it can be hard to celebrate and get in the holiday spirit when an individual or family is experiencing homelessness," Brown said. "As future social workers, we believe in helping vulnerable populations and giving back to the community. This bake sale was a fun way for us to accomplish that."

Social work senior Allissa Ash serves as one of SWA's social media managers. Ash gives an explanation as to why the SWA decided to set up bake sales for OBK.

"SWA strives to not only support

people on campus, but off campus as well," Ash said. "Our Brother's Keeper provides many services for those struggling with homelessness or transitioning into permanent housing. We wanted to give back to an organization that gives a lot to begin with."

OBK was in need of donations before the bake sales. Back in 2013, the Ferris State University welding technology and engineering students donated more than 240 food items and a check worth \$250 to the OBK. The OBK was the perfect place to help a vulnerable population and to give back to the community according to Brown.

College of Arts, Science and Education academic advisor Dave Schrock baked some homemade cookies and brought them to the SWA so they could donate them to the OBK.

"I learned that SWA was doing a bake sale to raise money for Our Brothers Keeper," Schrock said. "So I donated cookies because it's a great cause. I also love supporting my advisees, many of whom are SWA members."

Schrock also donated the cookies because he knows that Ferris' campus and the Big Rapids community are closely connected and depend on each other. His students who major in social work can complete an internship at OBK to help those in need. He stated that those who took the internship learned a lot from the experience and benefitted greatly from the

shelter's services.

Math professor Dr. Victor Piercey, who is the treasurer of the shelter, stated the donations have allowed him and the other staff to help many people in need.

"We are a shelter for people experiencing homelessness serving Mecosta, Osceola, Newaygo,

and Lake Counties," Piercey said. "We provide meals and a place to stay while those facing homelessness work to find more permanent housing. So far in 2023, we have provided over 12,000 bed-nights to those in need. Altogether, typically we spend about \$30 for each bed-night. We are grateful to our

donors that help us make this happen."

Visit Our Brother's Keeper's website or contact (231) 629-8033 for more information about the organization, or to learn how to help.

## SHORT-TERM FACULTY LED PROGRAM

### COSTA RICA

**+ Dates**  
Semester: Summer 2024  
From: May 9 to June 6

**+ General Information**  
**Faculty:**  
Dr. Eric Warner  
Dr. Lucero Flores-Paez  
**Class:**  
SPAN 100 Spanish for Business and Travel  
SPAN 333 Contemporary Culture and Society of Hispanic America  
SPAN 397 Independent Study - Costa Rican Language, Literature, and Film  
**Estimated cost:**  
\$3,200 plus 3 to 6 credits

**+ How to contact us**  
• Email: [international@ferris.edu](mailto:international@ferris.edu)  
• Website: [www.ferris.edu/international/studyabroad/](http://www.ferris.edu/international/studyabroad/)

**+ Locations**  
Coronado, Puerto Viejo, Jaco, San Jose, Doka Coffee Plantation, Sarchi, La Paz Waterfall Gardens, Poas Volcano, Indigenous Reserve (organic cacao process), Cahuita National Park

**+ Housing info**  
Mostly home stays with some hotels

**+ Description**  
Discover Costa Rica through this immersive Spanish language experience. Enjoy learning more about Spanish culture through home-stays and cultural site visits.

*Ferris State University*

# Obtaining event permits

## What you need to know before scheduling your event

**Kate Babel**  
Freelance Reporter

Obtaining event permits differ in Big Rapids depending on where you want to hold your event.

While Ferris is considered private property, places like downtown are considered public property and require event permits before an event can be held.

If anyone's looking to have an event on public property in Big Rapids, there's a step-by-step process. It starts with filling out an event form, either online at City Hall's website or by obtaining the paperwork. They then bring/submit the form to City Hall. Once City Hall files it to the appropriate departments the form is brought to the Department of Public Safety.

Department of Public Safety Officer William Sell explained the reasoning behind DPS looking at the permits.

"If it's going to be in the streets and cones need to be set up, they'd forward [the event form] to [the Department of Public Works] and they would forward it to us," Sell said. "I would normally look over it. Usually it's myself or the chief of police would look over the events form, see if there's any concerns or anything like that. And then as long as we approve it, we send it back to City Hall. Once they get all the approvals from all the other departments, it's good to go."

If someone has applied for the event form in the past, there're a few differences that they can look for on the application form.

"I say that this form has changed. Just where we ask a little bit more detailed questions.

You know if you're going to be doing things like that, we request a map of where you're going to be holding the event. But as far as changes there hasn't been anything I know," Sell said. "The only other thing that would be is lots of times previously it doesn't have to do with the police department, but DPW was a lot of times supplying portlets, other things stages and things like that."

In addition to this, the form previously had an application fee of \$25. However, this fee has been waived. The fee schedule, which shows the cost of certain items required such as porta-potties, is still located on the back portion of the application. According to Sell, depending on the event, The City of Big Rapids can help sponsor and cover part of the cost.

Ferris has a different approach in regard to event planning. Campus groups like Entertainment Unlimited communicate with the Center for Student Involvement and hold annual events like open mic nights and grocery bingo.

Marketing sophomore David Carrier works for Entertainment Unlimited in Retention and Recruitment.

"The group votes on what we would like to see most of the time and the programming chairs usually pick a couple things like make and takes and then if it's big event like the homecoming comedian, the bonfire, and the spring concert are all usually us and the university itself," Carrier said. "Organizing events is normally just EU we get any and all supplies that the event requires unless the event is a vendor event and then most events like artists, make and takes and

big shows take about two to three months to plan and finalize."

This kind of communication allows for the event approval process to gain some speed compared to events on public property. EU provides guest speakers and activities all within the budget provided to them by the CSI and the university.

Certain events are so big that they require law enforcement to get involved. Events such as parades require police officers as escorts. However, on Ferris State grounds there's only certain events such as Homecoming that are expected to have safety requirements which need to be acknowledged as the event goes on.

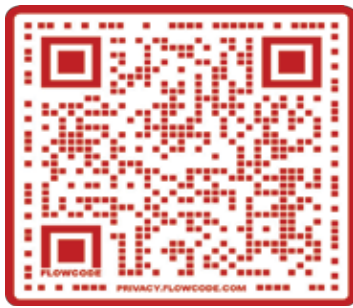
"If it's a large event where there's going to be a lot of people say like a parade, we'll have extra officers that will be on either on foot patrol or we'll need to bring in somebody to lead the parade," Sell said. "I just basically go through and make sure that if it's going to be on city streets, if it's going to be safe. If there's going to be road closures, make sure if there's alcohol involved, that the correct permits are pulled with the state for that. There's special permits that need to be pulled if you're going to serve alcohol on public property."

While the processes are different, events in Big Rapids both on and off campus require essential paperwork such as permits and guidelines that need to be met before they can happen. If someone's planning on holding an event on public property, they can visit The City of Big Rapids website for the application.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

### Now Hiring for Winter Positions



Apply Here

- News reporter
- Culture reporter
- Sports reporter
- Special Editions Editor

For more Information Contact our Editor in Chief  
oakesj3@ferris.edu



## DECEMBER

8th

Last Day of Classes

11th-15th

Examination Week

Good luck, Bulldogs!

15th

Commencement

18th

Final Grades Due

Grades due by 1pm

Graphic: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

# Opinions

Jackie Moglia | Opinions Editor | [mogliaj@ferris.edu](mailto:mogliaj@ferris.edu)

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

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

The Ferris State Torch welcomes comments on topics of interest to the general readership. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length and The Torch reserves the right to edit for length. Letters will not be edited for grammar, punctuation or spelling. The Torch will not print letters deemed to be libelous or obscene. All letters must be signed by their authors and include his or her phone number.

Unsigned editorials appearing on this page are the opinion of The Torch and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the university's administration, faculty or staff. Signed columns represent the opinion of the writer. Inquiries regarding editorial content should be directed to the Editor in Chief at (231) 591-5978.

To advertise with the Torch, contact Julie Wiersma at the Pioneer Group at (231) 592-8373 or [Julie.Wiersma@hearst.com](mailto:Julie.Wiersma@hearst.com)

Student media retain the same rights, responsibilities, privileges and protections afforded by the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and under applicable state laws.

The Torch and [fsutorch.com](http://fsutorch.com), the student newspaper and its accompanying online version focused on Ferris State University, are public forums for student expression. Student editors have the authority and responsibility to make all content decisions without censorship or advanced approval for both the print and online editions of the student newspapers.

## Torch Staff

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Editor in Chief</b><br>Jessica Oakes<br><a href="mailto:oakesj3@ferris.edu">oakesj3@ferris.edu</a> | <b>Reporters</b><br>Jeffery Walker<br>Jack Alcorn<br>Jael Snowden<br>Tate Zellman<br>Brook Blausey<br>Kendall Phillips<br>Kathleen Camp |
| <b>Production Manager</b><br>Harmony Goodman  | <b>Freelance Reporters</b><br>Sean Anderson<br>Kate Babel   |
| <b>Production Assistant</b><br>Hailey Nye   | <b>Photographers</b><br>Sam Mulder<br>Levi Waling   |
| <b>News Editor</b><br>Ember St. Amour   | <b>Freelance Photographers</b><br>Jack Starkey<br>Maddie Epps   |
| <b>Culture Editor</b><br>Giuliana Denicolo  | <b>Distribution</b><br>HIRING<br>Contact EIC  |
| <b>Sports Editor</b><br>Dylan Rider   | <b>Ready for Life Distribution</b><br>Trevor Kazzyak  |
| <b>Opinions Editor</b><br>Jackie Moglia   | <b>Advisor</b><br>Garrett Stack<br><a href="mailto:GarrettStack@ferris.edu">GarrettStack@ferris.edu</a>                                 |
| <b>Multimedia Editor</b><br>Jordan Wilson   | <b>Copy Editors</b><br>Marlow Losey<br>Anthony Malinowski<br>Connor Fuller  |
| <b>Web Editor</b><br>Lucas Gill   |   |
| <b>Special Editions Editor</b><br>Alex Brickley   |   |

## EDITOR'S COLUMN:

# Season's spendings



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Jessica Oakes**  
*Editor in Chief*

Black Friday and Cyber Monday just marked the beginning of the spending spree of the holidays.

People today, especially Americans, hardly need a reason to indulge in more tech, cosmetics and countless pieces of fast fashion that will inevitably be trashed or returned. In November and December, marketers get to tell us that the way we spend money is the visible manifestation of our love for friends and family.

The narrative change we see at the end of November would be sudden enough to give an onlooker whiplash if it wasn't annual.

On the fourth Thursday of the month, millions of Americans go back to wherever they call home. We eat until we're hardly mobile and revel in all the things and people we are so grateful to have.

It's time to enjoy the good things, from pumpkin pie to your grandparents health, and ignore the bad things, from one genocide in our history books to the constant coverage of another on TV.

Right when we are most thankful, we wake up from this carb-induced peace of mind and head straight to Target or the Apple store.

Before online shopping took over nearly every market, dedicated Black Friday shoppers set up camp outside their favorite stores as early as Thanksgiving night. We can barely be content with what we have for one day, then it's time to buy as much as

possible at the best price.

Walmart parking lot camping and flat screen TV fist fights are a rarity in 2023. Don't let this convince you that Americans have become less focused on their consumption. Black Friday sales saw a record breaking \$9.12 billion in profits last year, up from \$8.92 billion in 2021.

We can't see how greedy this is. Holiday shopping hides in the thin sprit of giving.

For years, I prided myself on my gift-giving. I've loved the sales and fancy gift tags in case someone forgot that it was me who just handed the box to them. In college, a lot of that was lost.

This is arguably our most stressful time of the year. I know that my friends and I are focused on finishing final projects, studying for exams and seeing if we can make it between holidays without grocery shopping again.

I can hardly remember any Christmas presents I've given or received at Ferris. Still, I've never felt more in love with and valued than by my friends. It's possible to give to your loved ones this year without adding to rapid-fire spending and returning.

Instead of buying more Starbucks cups because you know your friend would love it, print out your favorite pictures with them.

Odds are, they need the cup as much as Starbucks needs the extra profit.

There's nothing a parent or even a significant other appreciates more than a hand-written letter.

Before you say goodbye to your roommates for the new year, you can all give back to each other by hosting a holiday dinner and cookie baking night. I guarantee it'll be more memorable than a cheap candle or socks.

For the sake of our environment and our bank accounts, I invite everyone to find new ways to show their love outside of cookie-cutter gift lists.



# SYNERGY

## NON-PROFIT HOUSING

(231) 629-8350

is currently accepting applications for our available 4 bedroom and 2 bedroom Market Rate apartment homes.

Rent includes water/sewer, trash removal, snow removal, lawn care, gas and electric.

To inquire, please call the office at (231) 629-8350 or e-mail at: [Synergyhousing@kmgprestige.com](mailto:Synergyhousing@kmgprestige.com)



This institution is an equal opportunity provider  
TDD/TYY 711



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

# And the Oscar goes to...

## “Killers of The Flower Moon” should sweep the Academy Awards

Jack Alcorn  
Sports Reporter

About two months ago, there were four films seen as the best of the year: “Spider-Man Across the Spider Verse,” “Barbie,” “Air” and “Oppenheimer.” Then, on Oct. 20, “Killers of the Flower Moon” stepped into the picture.

The film is about the Osage Native American nation in 1920s Oklahoma, where the Osage people found oil on their land.

World War I veteran Ernest Burkhart is played by Leonardo DiCaprio. He returns home to live with his uncle, Robert De Niro’s William Hale, and seeks to marry an Osage woman named Mollie and played by Lily Gladstone. Following his arrival, many Osage members are murdered by white people for their money, land and oil.

I have no doubt in my mind that Martin Scorsese’s 26th directed film will win him his first ever Best Picture award at the Oscars, his second Best Director award and win the cast some awards as well.

While 2023 was a great year for movies, there are a lot of reasons the former selections won’t win these awards.

First off, the academy has never loved superhero films, with only one having been nominated, 2019’s “Black Panther.” While “Spider-Man” is a great film and will most likely win Best Animated feature and Best Original sound, it unfortunately just doesn’t have the respect of the academy.

“Barbie” was never made to be a Best Picture film. Director Greta Gerwig made the film to discuss the topics of feminism, patriarchy and matriarchy. And while the film made lots of money and received positive reviews, it also received lots of backlash as many see it as pitting men and women against one another. Films with split views like that won’t win Best Picture.

“Air” surprised a lot of people, including myself. It was a movie that actually told an unknown story and didn’t rely on the biggest name in sports, Michael Jordan, to be great. It had big names such as Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Viola Davis and Jason Bateman. Despite those big names, it didn’t do great with critics, and critics are the people who pick the winner.

“Oppenheimer” in my opinion was the Best Picture winner prior to “Killers of the Flower Moon.”

It accurately depicted Oppenheimer’s life and emotions. The issue with it is that the first half sucked and dragged-out pointless court scenes that, at the time, made no sense. It was a three-hour long movie that felt like five hours, which is the opposite of “Killers of the Flower Moon.”

Unlike the directors on the other films, Scorsese is seen as one of the greatest director to ever live, which already gives him a boost in awards. “Killers of the Flower Moon” was a historically important film that showed the horrors of American greed and hate towards the Native American people. It was a three-hour film, but it felt like two, at most. Every scene felt important and held great performances.

Leonardo DiCaprio gave his best performance of his career, which is saying a lot, because he’s arguably the greatest actor of this generation. Robert De Niro had us all fooled and also gave a great performance. Unlike the other two, actress Lily Gladstone was widely unheard of prior to the film and yet her performance should be and will be talked about as one of the greatest female roles of all time.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

The Oscars for this year of movies will take place March 2024. My expectation is that Scorsese’s film receives Best Picture, Best Director, Best Lead Actor, Best Supporting Actor and Best Lead Actress.

Killers of the Flower Moon will be known as one of the best films of the 21st century and I believe it should run away with multiple awards at the Oscars.

# Emojis: The new hieroglyphs



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

Alexandra Brickley  
Special Editor

Texting or instant messaging is something most of us do everyday. Written, or typed, word isn’t something new, as people have been writing things down for centuries, but there is something new that we use: emojis.

But are emojis actually new, or are they just a new adaptation of a style of written language that people have used before?

When thinking about pictographic writing systems, the one most prevalent and most likely heard of are the Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. These various symbols make up the writing system. When we look at them today, they make little sense. For example, why does a foot or an arm often get translated to the letter B?

It’s not something the average person might ever understand, as we lack the context that someone in Ancient Egypt would’ve had.

The same could be said for how we use emojis today. They can be used to “write” whole sentences, and since we have the context of what they mean or visually depict, and while it might take a second, you can still figure out what the eye emoji, the person running emoji, and the clock emoji might mean when all put together.

While emojis can and are used to make whole sentences, they are also used to show the reader something extra. Emojis are used to convey emotion more quickly than text can.

“Emojis often serve as emo-

tional shorthand — think smiley blowing a heart kiss to soften a message or send love, or a winking face to signal sarcasm — filling an expressive void that text messages may fail to convey,” said in the New York Times article “Emojis Meet Hieroglyphs: If King Tut Could Text.”

Adopting this older writing style allows us to text and message each other more quickly and with more clarity than text alone provides. Like many things, the modern take on hieroglyphs looks very different than they did in 3200 B.C.

The first painted image of a person looks very different from the pictures we can take of ourselves now. Things had to be essential for a long time for it to be written down; compare that to your last text message.

Now, we message each other with ease, we can add an eye roll emoji or a laughing emoji to show emotional context. While what these images are meant to convey has changed to be adapted to the modern day, these modernized hieroglyphics are still being used to communicate. Wanting to be as quick and effective as we can in our messages has brought us back to pictographic writing.

What better way to show emotions than to have a little image of it? As our needs change, how we use things changes. This led us to adopt an old form of writing, turning hieroglyphics into emojis.

Today, the smiley face emoji is as common in communication as the image of a vulture in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

# Environmental Awareness Month

Alexandra Brickley | Special Editions Editor | Brickla@ferris.edu

## “As the Earth caves in”

As a child, I would pass by this little house  
on my way back from school every single  
day,

I remember how perfectly shaped the  
frames of every window were

How the curtains remained opened a tad on  
the right side of the sill

Like there was someone or something  
behind it at all times,

Keeping guard

Watching over its temple

It's adorably small and square temple

Making sure its beauty was upheld

The house had not a stain nor scratch  
around it

Not a dent nor bang

Just a perfect coat of white paint that was  
the sun's favorite mirror,

I passed by this house for the last time 10  
years ago

Never really thinking about it much  
because I never saw it,

I almost forgot it ever existed  
I almost forgot I loved admiring it

And today when I took an old path to an old  
friend's house,

There it was

All by itself

Gutted

Rotted

Tore down limb from limb

And I had no idea what was happening the  
entire time I was gone,

Learning after I felt the brittle wood that

Beauty will remain as long as you allow it to

I understood what had happened

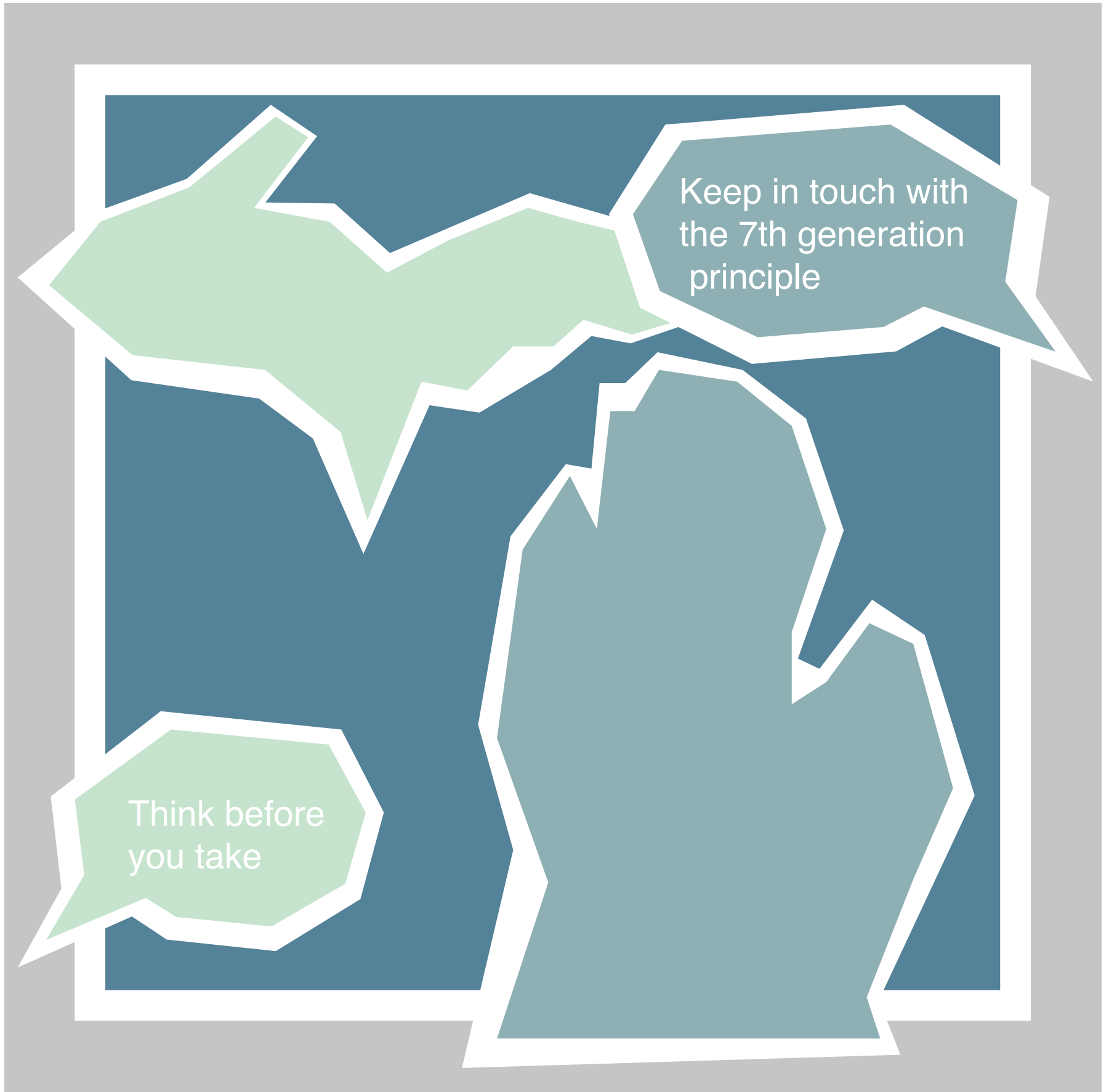
Then I finally started paying attention.

by Maksymilian Sidorowicz



# For the next generations

Mid-Michigan's native communities speak on environmentalism



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

**Jessica Oakes & Giuliana Denicolo**  
Editor in Chief  
Culture Editor

In an age of abundance and instant gratification, the Seventh Generation Principle may be more relevant than ever.

Stemming from an ancient Iroquois philosophy, this principle states that each person should think about how their actions will affect people seven generations down the line.

"You need to think about who you're sharing the world with," Ferris alum and trustee Mike Fisher said. "And when I say that I'm not just talking about us sharing the world with each other as people, but sharing the world with a natural environment. Also sharing the world with folks seven generations from now."

Fisher studied environmental biology at Ferris. He now serves on

the Board of Trustees and works as the Associate General Counsel for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan.

Early in his career, Fisher discovered that his involvement in environmental science also involved him in environmental policy. This led him to serve on the Isabella County Board of Commissioners.

He finds that sustainability is "wrapped" in every decision he makes, from collecting water samples to creating budgets.

"We should be mindful of what impact we will be having on the future whether it comes to fertilizing your lawn in a way that's safe and sound... or ensuring that a construction project is designed with sustainable principles in mind," Fisher said.

Fisher has seen the world with the Seventh Generation Principle his whole life and encourages others to learn more about the local tribes and beliefs in their area.

"That's something that I think is pivotal to mid-Michigan because it'll give you a sense of the history and what the tribe is doing nowadays," Fisher said. "Understanding that history, you can see why the natural world and environmental protection are so important to tribal people. Our land for us is sacred."

Lee Ruffino is the cultural manager of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe's Seventh Generation Program at the Elijah Elk Cultural Center. She sees a double meaning within the Seventh Generation Principle because she also thinks of those seven generations behind her.

"It's a good way to remember, seven generations ago, what our ancestors sacrificed for us to be here today," Ruffino said.

Though she thinks of her ancestors before her, she equally thinks of those who will come seven generations later. Ruffino believes that

the principle describes both the past and the future.

"In our cultural department, we are trying to establish some of the sacred medicines that we have lost," Ruffino said. "We're trying to get them back in this area so that the next generations will have that, and they'll be able to harvest on their own."

This principle guides Ruffino on how she chooses to live today. She tries to keep her purchasing sustainable by shopping locally and not participating too much in quick consumerism. Along with this, she strongly believes in thinking deeply about where her food comes from before purchasing it.

"Before, we were able to roam wherever. We lived off the land," Ruffino said. "You can't really do that when you're relocated to a little piece of land that really has nothing to offer as far as resources for fishing, gathering or even farming. Our conservation department

takes care of that by making trails so that we can utilize it for cultural purposes."

Five years ago, Ruffino's tribe "acquired back" 900 acres of land in Tawas. This new land has provided them with many resources like water, wild rice and medicine.

Ruffino believes that the Seventh Generation Principle can lead people to the right path if they truly live it. She sees the right path as a place where one learns to be sustainable, generous and thoughtful.

"You have to stop and think before you take something," Ruffino said. "If you're doing anything with the Earth, you have to pause and make an offering or say a prayer. For whatever you take, there's always reciprocation."

To learn more ways to stay in touch with the Seventh Generation Principle and other elements of Native American culture, visit the Elijah Elk Cultural Center or Zibiwing Center in Isabella County.



# The green tax

The cost of sustainability

## Recycle of Mecosta County

### What recycling they accept

Hours  
Saturday and Monday 9am-1pm

#### Paper

Newspaper  
Office paper both colored and white  
Magazines  
Books  
Junk mail  
Ridged cardboard  
Fiberboard

#### Glass

Colorless jugs  
Colorless bottles

#### Plastic

Plastic Bottles  
(#1 & #2 Only)  
No caps

Jugs (#1 & #2  
only) No caps  
Styrofoam

#### Metal

Steel tin cans  
Metal pieces  
Aluminum

Batteries

Lithium  
batteries

Graphic by: Alexandra Brickley | Special Editions Editor

**Alexandra Brickley**  
Special Editions Editor

As our effects on the environment become increasingly prevalent, people are looking to get rid of unsustainable practices. The cost that comes with it may be more than what's feasible for the average student.

For the people who want to do more than just the basics of recycling while at college, students might look for products that are more friendly to the environment. Though it's not something that everyone can afford, the fact that the product is green or clean adds to its worth.

"But others charge more simply

because they can. 'Eco-friendly' or 'sustainable' branding is increasingly used as a marketing strategy to distinguish products as premium or elite, making them almost certain to appeal to wealthier shoppers," CBS Money reporter Irina Ivanova said.

While it could be said that appealing to the wealthier shoppers to shop green, it leaves those of average wealth or lower unable to do much more.

This entry cost gives being green a type of elitism that can be used to shame people who can't afford to pay that extra money to buy those products without going over budget or sacrificing other much needed items in some ar-

reas. As it becomes more popular, it's become a new marketing tactic rather than being used to help the environment.

CBS noted that for some companies, "green" presentation is a marketing strategy rather than a sustainability promise.

This makes it so that the average student, while they might like to do more than just sorting their trash and recycling their pop cans and bottles, is not within their budget. As most things gain popularity, the prices jump, as can be seen with more people going thrift shopping to cut down on fast fashion.

This leaves students to do what's possible and is sustainable. That being going to the store

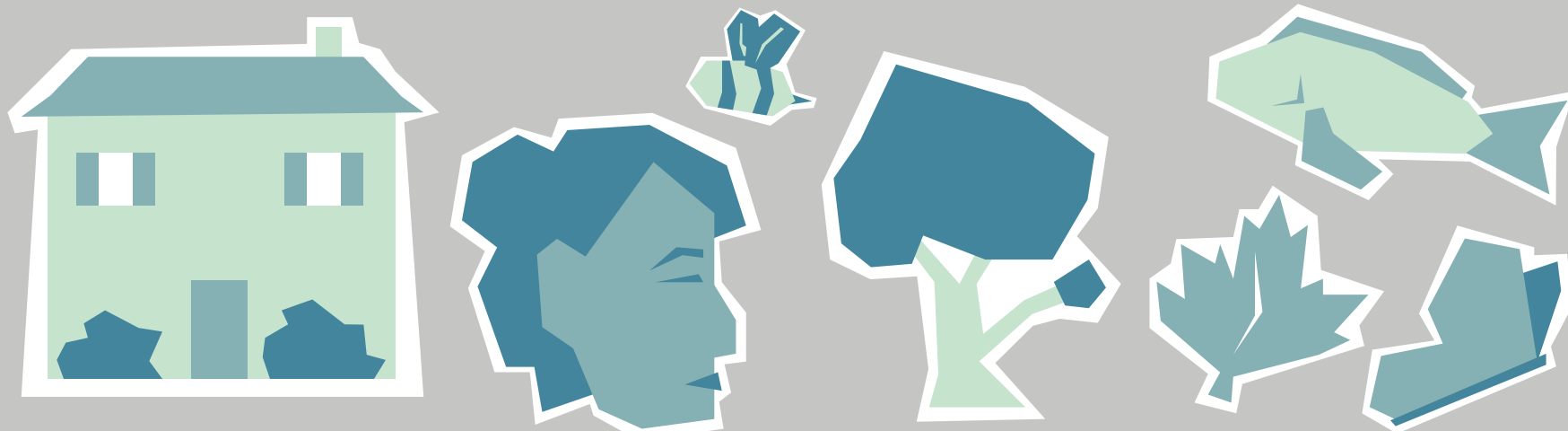
and recycling pop cans and bottles or having separate trash for recyclables that can be taken to the local recycling center.

"Unfortunately, if it doesn't fit your lifestyle, or where you live, where it's easy to recycle but you just do what you can," Ferris student Kayleen Howard said.

Accessibility can be another block to entry when it comes to being green, with limited access to different stores or recycling centers or things like that. While the person might be willing to go the extra mile to be green, where they live can be another block for them. Such as having to pay for the truck to pick up the recycling if your county offers that.

"It's pros and cons, like, yes you want to good for the environment, but then also are we really doing any good, if there are additional trucks at are on diesel," Howard said.

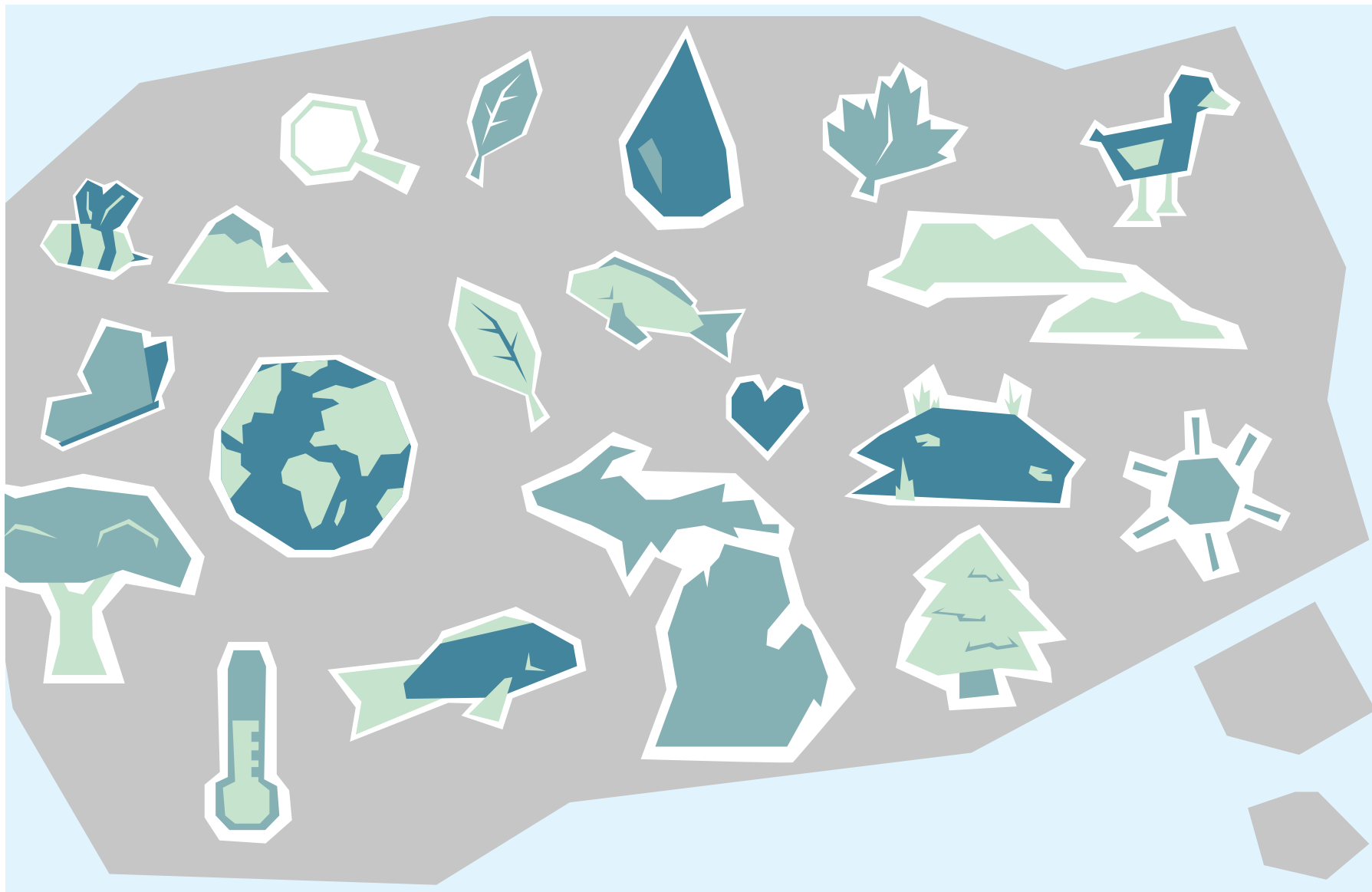
Between being a green product as a marketing tactic to jack up the price of their products and the other costs of entry to being sustainable, it's becoming something only the most elite and wealthy can afford to do. This leaves the others who want to do more unable to do so with the high cost of entry.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

## E.G.L.E.

## Environmental information resources



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Nate Mathewson**  
*Guest Writer*

What it means to be environmentally conscious is sometimes nebulous. Whether aspiring for activism or looking to be well-informed, it can be difficult to find a starting point. One option is to start locally, becoming more knowledgeable about the immediate area you find yourself.

While a simple Google search would yield some general information about any large-scale environmental events that may have occurred over the years, there are tools available to the public that allow for a closer look into the environmental health of your local area.

Biology professor Dr. Doug Workman knows all about these tools. He teaches an environmental regulations class that explores these informative tools as well as running his environmental consulting firm.

“For me, environmental awareness is knowing how to answer the questions that you might have,” Dr. Workman said, “What are all the resources that are available to me that I can use to understand my environment and maybe be more protective of my environment? There are all kinds of online resources for that.”

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, or EGLE, is a state agency that focuses on environmental issues at the state level. In addition to the several functions it performs as a department, EGLE provides the public with access to high-quality informative environmental maps and data.

These maps aim to make what would otherwise be difficult-to-understand data more digestible for the general public. As such, interactive maps are a helpful tool for someone looking to improve their environmental awareness. The maps cover instances of per- and

polyfluorinated substance contamination, wellhead protection zones, areas designated for governmental cleanup assistance and E. coli outbreaks.

Provided in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency and linked on EGLE’s website is the My Waterway Portal. This service allows users to access basic information about the various bodies of water within their watershed. It also shows permitted dischargers and reports for more specific waterway information like swimming conditions, eating fish, aquatic life surveys and restoration plans and protection efforts.

When using this tool, it is evident that almost every waterway in the Muskegon River Watershed bears the red designation of “impaired” by polychlorinated biphenyls. Workman explained that PCB contamination in our waterways is a sign of our “toxic chemical legacy,” a chemical we used to use for cooling transformers without

realizing its potential environmental impact.

Another tool provided by EGLE is the environmental mapper.

“It lets you know what kind of contamination events have been recorded by the state of Michigan near [your] home. And you can learn more about them with respect to what kind of contamination occurred, and what kind of actions had been done for cleanup, if any,” Workman said.

Many sites around Big Rapids have experienced, or still experience, contamination. One example is the large, empty lot that can be seen while crossing the bridge to Swede Hill Park on Baldwin Street. This site was previously used for manufacturing. Users can find a PDF of the paperwork concerning the exact details of the site through the environmental mapper tool.

The document states that the soil was contaminated by both arsenic and PCBs. The spread of

these chemicals into the nearby Muskegon River was halted by cleanup efforts, but the land itself is still placed under a restrictive covenant.

“[A restrictive covenant] is protective of that contamination plume so that further development does not disturb it and cause it to move,” Workman said. The covenant bars further development on the site unless the developer were to invest in a cleanup plan that was satisfactory to the State.

There is a plethora of information available to the general public on EGLE’s website about our local ecology. The tools visited here are just two of the dozens of resources available through EGLE and the EPA. There is more to the story of Big Rapids’ environmental health which can be found through governmental resources like these.

## DISCLAIMER

Due to the nature of this special edition the production team has decided to use the font Ryman Eco, a font specially designed to use 35% less ink.

The change starts with you. The production team encourages that with this holiday season you use some of our old prints to wrap your gifts.

Graphic by: Harmony Goodman and Hailey Nye | Production Manager and Production Assistant

# Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

## Devin Scott's Bulldog story Ferris alum visits to share his time as a student



Photo by Kathleen Camp | Culture Reporter

Speaker Devin Scott and communication professor Sandy Alspach.

**Kathleen Camp**  
Culture Reporter

In the early 1990s, Devin Scott was a 15-year-old father with an unclear future. In 2023, he returned to his alma mater as the Human Resources Manager for Employee and Labor Relations at Blue Cross Blue Shield Michigan.

Scott graduated from Ferris in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in applied speech communication. Scott was one of the student leaders in the movement to establish what is now known as the Office of Multicultural Student Services. On Nov. 15, OMSS invited him back to tell his Bulldog story.

He had a friend who went to Ferris and suggested that the two of them room together. Scott believed that this friend of his was placed in his life so that he would end up going to school here.

"God places people in your life, which has been happening to me all my life," Scott said. "And if you look back, you will see that there were people who you met in your life that gave you your life."

During his presentation, Scott

described that he felt "on top of the world" when he was a student at Ferris. During his freshman year, he felt that school was an escape for him. Along with this, he felt his friend's determination rubbed off on him and got him to work harder.

He usually felt "intimidated in the classroom," but there was one class that he felt changed his life because it helped him understand himself and what he was good at. Throughout his college years, Scott was involved in OMSS, he was the president of Entertainment Unlimited and he often practiced advocacy. According to Scott, these extracurriculars helped "kids like him stay in school."

"There were a lot of white fraternities and sororities that were going to boycott Earth Day and I had to come up with a solution to bring us all together," Scott said.

According to Scott, former Director of Student Leadership Activities Michelle Burke played a large part in his growth. When he was a student, she opened her home and cooked meals for him. He believes she taught helped him "be able to do things for others."

Michelle Burke, former director of Student Leadership Activities opened her home and cooked meals for students such as Devin. She taught him to do things for others and to be a light for others. She was so important to Devin and his college journey that he made a point to search for her to make sure she was at this event.

Michelle Burke described what it was like for her when the sit-in happened.

"This was my first professional job after getting my master's degree and [Scott] challenged me in a lot of ways," Burke said.

Communications professor Dr. Sandy Alspach is a close friend of Scott.

"We have remained close for the last twenty years," Alspach said.

According to the Ferris Event Calendar, Scott's story is known to be a "classic Ferris story of 'opportunity and industry'." Along with this, he was eager to share his story with the campus.

Culture editor Giuliana Denicolo contributed to the reporting of this article.

## Early December Event Calendar

5<sup>th</sup>

Holiday Gift Sale

At the David Eisler Center 10 AM - 2 PM

5<sup>th</sup>

Employee Holiday Reception

At Kendall College 5 PM - 7 PM

5<sup>th</sup>

Therapy Dogs

At Flite Library 6 PM - 7 PM

6<sup>th</sup>

Women's Center Bake Sale

At IRC Connector 11 AM - 4 PM

6<sup>th</sup>

Jazz Band Holiday Concert

At Williams Auditorium 7:30 PM

# Getting ready to graduate

## Seniors prepare for fall commencement

Brook Blausey  
Culture Reporter

With the end of the semester right around the corner, Ferris seniors are close to putting on their caps and gowns and walking across the stage for their fall graduation ceremony.

For many seniors, this will be their first time walking across the stage in front of friends and family as they were 2020 high school graduates. Due to COVID-19's first-ever cases striking in 2019, many high schools were shut down forcing the majority of the seniors at the time to graduate either virtually or from their cars.

According to President Bill Pink, Ferris has a commencement committee that "works on everything related to ceremony planning." Within the next month, the ceremony will be fully planned and ready to go. Pink is prepared to shine a light on this year's seniors as most of them are walking for the first time.

"We acknowledge the fact that the majority of our seniors were not able to attend their high school graduations," Pink said. "We will acknowledge this at both ceremonies taking place this year."

However, for others who did get to walk at their high school graduation, COVID-19 still affected almost half of their college experience.

Business administration senior Tamera Motley will be taking the stage this fall. Though she had a regular high school ceremony, Motley's life has changed a lot since then. This time graduation comes around for her, she will be experiencing it without someone who was very close to her.

"My mother passed away during the pandemic, so it feels nerve-racking to walk across the stage without her in the audience," Motley said. "With my biggest motivator not around, it can be pretty sad, even though I know she is super proud."

Through her time at Ferris,

Motley was well involved in the community by running a small business while also being a part of Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance. She describes her experience as a college student as sometimes feeling "like a lifetime" because of how much she has done. She feels that even though she started college in the beginning of the pandemic, she was still able to "stay dedicated through the pandemic" and "learn, grow and accomplish a lot" in her four years here.

"Ferris made sure to make us graduates feel special by offering quick responses and guidance," Motley said. "It feels unreal and satisfying to be graduating again. These four years haven't been the easiest, but I am truly thankful for my university and community. I now have a stream of networks that I can cherish for a lifetime."

Motley plans to continue working her two jobs after she graduates, as well as starting graduate school to obtain her Masters de-

gree in accelerated business administration.

Business administration senior Lauren Roberts also had a regular high school graduation ceremony, but was still affected by COVID-19 her freshman year. With graduation approaching fast, Roberts feels a mix of emotions. As she's excited about graduating and starting the next chapter of her life, she's equally nervous about finding a job. She remembers when she was starting college, she felt similar emotions.

"I didn't know anyone coming to Michigan, and with COVID, I had no in-person classes, so it sucked," Roberts said. "But as the years went on, my experience changed and now I'm graduating. It's very nerve-racking but also exciting."

After graduation, she hopes to find a job at a medical device or in a pharmaceutical company. She feels Ferris has been a big help in preparing students for life outside of college.

"Ferris hosted an orientation

day and provided the seniors with graduation products, so they have made sure to make us feel special about graduating," Roberts said. "They also have been helping prepare us in these last stages by helping me gain knowledge about the business world and providing me with hands-on experience like internships."

Seniors will be closing this chapter of their lives as they proceed into the real world with their new degrees. After the long process the students have gone through, they finally are able to walk across the stage, some for the first time.

"We are so proud of our bulldogs. And if you are graduating in the spring, the finish line is in sight. Finish strong," Pink said.

Fall commencement will take place on Dec. 15. Doors will open to family and friends at 8 a.m. and the ceremony will begin at 9 a.m.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Managers

### Follow us on Twitter!



## @fsutorch

**VOTE TODAY FOR THE ATHLETES OF THE WEEK!**

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

**ATHLETES OF THE WEEK**

sponsored by

**Hungry Howie's** FLAVORED CRUST PIZZA

**the Rapids**

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE NOMINATED ATHLETES.

**LET ME WORK FOR YOU...**

communication, STRATEGY, LEARN, Creation, PROCESS, POWER, IDEAS, Objectives, SUCCESS, Target, PLANNING, BUSINESS, analysis, IDEAS, Achieve, POWER, Vision, DEVELOPMENT, SOLUTION, COACHING, LEARN, Create, BUSINESS, STRATEGY, SOLUTION, POWER, SUCCESS, communication, PLANNING

**HEARST** | MIDWEST MEDIA GROUP

**TOGETHER WE WILL GET RESULTS**

Contact Julie Lewis:  
Julie.lewis@hearst.com  
231.592.8373

# Media Minute

## Blue Eye Samurai



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Hailey Nye**  
Production Assistant

Blue Eye Samurai released on Nov. 3 on Netflix, is an eight-episode animated series created by Michael Green and Amber Noizumi. Taking place in Edo period Japan, the half-white, half-Japanese sword master, Mizu, swears revenge on the four white men that reside within Japan for the suffering she has faced for being a biracial child of one of these men, half-white and half-Japanese.

Although this show is animated, Blue Eye Samurai faces mature themes and is intended for older audiences. With a rating of TV-MA, the show discusses topics of gore, language, sex, nudity, smoking and violence. This information isn't meant to discourage viewers, but instead to inform them of what they will get into when watching Blue Eye Samurai.

Covering a variety of hard-hitting topics such as gender, revenge, power, race and discrimination, Blue Eye Samurai touches upon each topic and theme with unique interest.

To further explore the themes of the show, Blue Eye Samurai features a variety of characters that embody those themes that

the show contains: A samurai of mixed race, a soba maker born without hands, a blind blacksmith, a defeated man who lost his honor, a woman who owns a brothel for peculiar tastes, a royal with a stutter and a princess who wants independence. Taking in the cultural context of 1600s Edo, Japan, these characters are nobodies who don't fit. They are disgraceful people in society, yet they are the best and most powerful statement in Blue Eye Samurai.

Noizumi based the protagonist, Mizu, on herself and her mixed-race experience. Noizumi wanted to portray the feeling of not being white or Japanese enough to fit in with either half. Being mixed race is a limbo for the character Mizu. She has found no other way but to be different and find purpose in revenge on those who brought her into this world and violated her mother.

Mizu has such a fierce rage that has spawned from the discrimination in her life that it's difficult for viewers not to feel sympathetic for her, but to be drawn in by her never-ending determination despite everything. It's not often found in media that an audience can experience and view a character of mixed race and the dilemmas they

must handle.

The theming and topics are not the only things that shine through within Blue Eye Samurai. Stunning animation, awe-inspiring choreography and exceptional storytelling all come together to make Blue Eye Samurai a show you won't want to miss.

With a rating on IMDb of nine out of ten, Blue Eye Samurai is definitely worth your time. With each episode lasting an average of 47 minutes, this addicting show will easily hook you in and have you staying up all night to binge it.

I agree with IMDb and would also give Blue Eye Samurai a nine out of ten rating. If you've taken the time to read this whole story, I ask you only one favor: Dip your toe in and watch one episode. With stunning visuals and a plot that keeps you on the edge of your seat, you'll have trouble putting it down.

Rating  
**9/10**



**READ A PAPER EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**-OR-**

**READ ARTICLES ONLINE AT  
WWW.FSUTORCH.COM**

# Sports

Dylan Rider | Sports Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

## No hope for three-peat

Bulldog football ends season with three losses for first time since 2016



Photos from Torch Archives

### Highlights from the 2023-2024 Ferris State Football season.

**Jeffery Walker**  
Sports Reporter

Ferris State Football begins their offseason following a quick end to their back-to-back championship defense.

The Bulldogs lost a tough matchup against their archrival Grand Valley State (10-1) in the first round of the playoffs 21-14 on Saturday, Nov. 18 at Lubbers Stadium in Allendale.

The Bulldogs still finished the season with a winning record of (8-3, 5-1 in conference). The Bulldogs went undefeated (5-0) at Top Taggart Field this season but were 3-3 on the road.

The early playoff exit marks an end to a three year streak of national championship berths. The three loss season also signifies first season with three losses since 2016.

For head coach Tony Annese, this season wasn't a failure despite the new territory they find themselves in.

"Really proud, it was obviously three tough losses in the season which hasn't happened in a quite long time here," Annese said. "It's

a fickle game, obviously winning is hard and so I was proud of our guys. We still had a great year, I really truthfully think you know this team is good enough to win the national championship."

This team still had a lot of success this year on both sides of the ball this season. The offense was electric and scored 442 points with an average of 40.2 points per game, 5,038 yards of total offense with an average of 458 yards per game, 240.9 yards through the air, and 217.1 yards on the ground.

The Bulldog defense was tough as they were able to force 16 interceptions for 149 yards and recovered seven fumbles with three touchdowns for the defense. They also had 698 tackles on the season and 16 sacks only allowing 282.2 yards per game and 17.9 points per game to keep that offense on the field.

This season marks the ninth consecutive year the Bulldogs have made the DII playoffs. Annese believes that the program's achievements and success reflects back on the people who have helped build it.

"It shows that our program is

really strong," Annese said. "Being the team out of 161 teams that have been in the playoffs the most consecutive times it's really something to say about our staff and our players."

Bulldog football will look different next year due to inevitable roster turnover through either transfers or graduation. Senior quarterback Mylik Mitchell, whose final year as a Bulldog came to a close with the loss, hasn't lost any love for his teammates and is excited to see what the future holds for the program.

"I love my guys, like coach is saying I'm not disappointed in nobody, I love them," Mitchell said. "I can't wait to come back and watch the young guys play. I know they've been hungry and so I've enjoyed every bit of it."

The Bulldogs did not have the season they hoped for but now they enter the offseason. There will be a lot of questions for the Bulldogs to answer between now and the kickoff of the 2024-25 season. However, if the past three seasons are any indication of what is to come, the Bulldogs may not stay down for long.

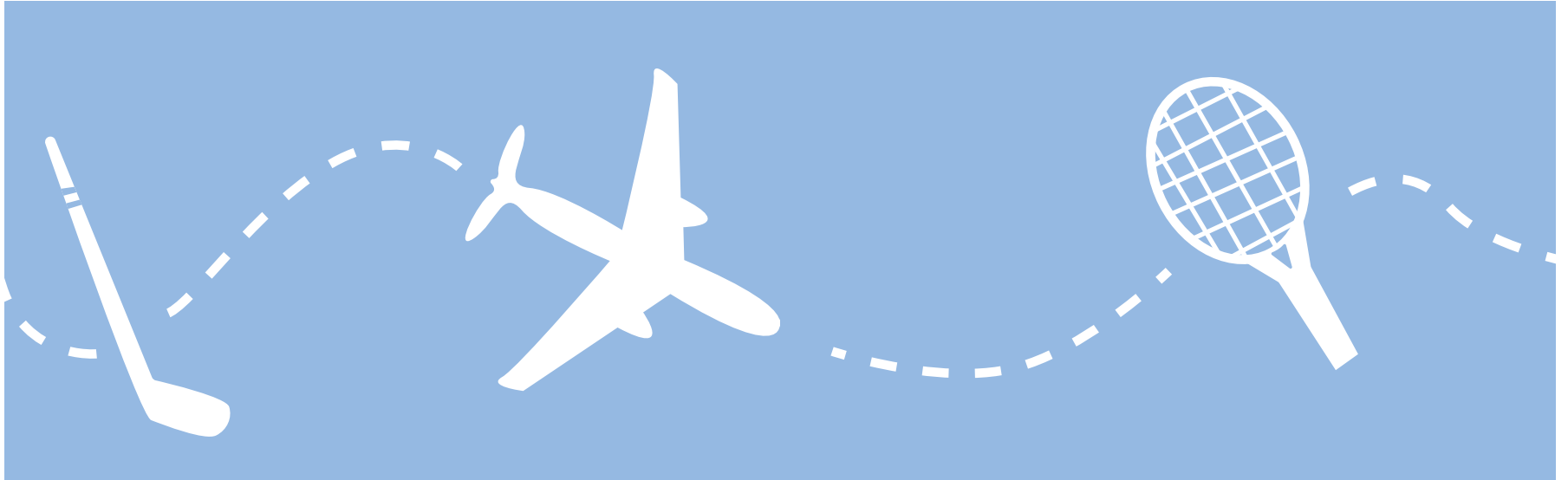


Photos from Torch Archives

### Highlights from the 2023-2024 Ferris State Football season.

# Home away from home

How two international athletes both became Bulldogs



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

**Jack Alcorn**  
Sports Reporter

Less than seven percent of American high school athletes move on to play college sports, and an even less percentage of international athletes get that opportunity.

According to the NCAA there are more than "25,000 international student-athletes" across all three divisions that participate in the NCAA. Ferris State is no different as they have managed to bring student-athletes from 9 different countries playing in 5 sports across Ferris athletics.

One of those athletes is senior forward Stepan Pokorny. The forward for the Bulldog Hockey team is from the Czech Republic where he lived for a majority of his life.

"I moved away from the Czech Republic when I was 16 years old, then I played hockey in Florida, South Dakota and Wisconsin," Pokorny said. "Once they recruited me, I knew Ferris would be a great fit. I loved the coaching staff, the campus, and the facilities."

Since joining the Bulldogs, Pokorny has accumulated 12 goals, 39 assists, and 200 shots. In his junior year, he led Ferris State in assists (16), points (22), and shots on goal (79). Despite all his success, he never forgot where he came and the people who helped him get here.

"I try to go home as much as possible and see my family," Pokorny said. "I believe I am the only student-athlete from the Czech Republic [to play at Ferris] ever, so it obviously means a lot to me to represent my home country here at Ferris."

Another athlete is women's tennis sophomore Ana Sofia Hernandez Ferrer. She is one of the 198 DII collegiate athletes from Mexico. By the time she was 16, Hernandez Ferrer started sending videos of her play to tennis head coach Mark Doren.

Those videos wound up getting her a scholarship which gave her the opportunity to play with her sister Maria Fernanda Hernandez Ferrer. The Mazatlan, Mexico native always dreamed of coming

to the United States despite it meaning she would be coming to a place completely different from her home country.

"I always looked for the opportunity to study in the US and my only possibility was by getting an athletic scholarship, so I started playing tennis," Hernandez Ferrer said. "At first it was kind of scary to start a life somewhere different from what I was used to, different culture and different people. But I met some amazing people that made me feel comfortable and let me be who I am."

Hernandez Ferrer feels "so happy" to share her culture with the rest of the world and make Mexico proud. Still acclimating herself into America wasn't as easy as she thought it would be.

"The culture is completely different from home, also the way people make connection with others," Hernandez Ferrer said. "Food is made completely different and there are some dishes I never ate before coming here. For me the most challenging aspect was getting used to the weather, where I'm from the weather is really warm and humid, so it was difficult at the beginning to be used to the cold and the snow."

So far this season Ana Sofia is 5-3 in matches.

Out of all the programs Tennis has the most diversity and Ferris State Athletic Director Steve Brockelbank feels that the tennis team as well as the other programs can contribute some of their success to the mesh of cultures in Ferris athletics.

"They add so much to the diversity of our teams and they bring unique experiences that help contribute to the success of our programs," Brockelbank said. "Our American student-athletes get exposed to different cultures, and I know our coaches appreciate their enthusiasm for collegiate athletics."

Pokorny and Hernandez Ferrer are just some of the many international athletes at Ferris who have found a home in Big Rapids.

**NEW!**  
**MAC 'N CHEESE PIZZA**

**LIMITED TIME OFFER!**  
AVAILABLE NOVEMBER 1  
— DECEMBER 31

**\$10.99**  
MEDIUM

A medium pizza smothered with delicious macaroni and cheese, mozzarella and crunchy panko bread crumbs

**FEATURED**  
CHEESE PUFF  
FLAVORED CRUST

**FLAVOR YOUR CRUST FOR FREE**

**Hungry Howie's**  
FLAVORED CRUST PIZZA

**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF FLAVOR!**

# Hungry Howie's

**FLAVORED CRUST PIZZA**

**BIG RAPIDS**

103S. State St • (231) 796-8000

Sun-Thu 11am-10pm • Fri & Sat 11am - 12am

# PLAYER'S CORNER: Emari O'Brien

The wide-receiver talks his athletic background, earning his position and next season

Jael Snowden  
Sports Reporter

The Ferris State Bulldog football team's season has ended after going 8-3 (5-1 GLIAC) on the season and a loss in the first round of the DII football playoffs. Junior wide-receiver Emari O'Brien flashed his skill throughout the season.

The Harper Woods native sat down with the Torch and answered a few questions about his upbringing, his experience at Ferris and why he believes that next season will be a big bounce back year for his squad.

**Q:** Where are you from and what's your background in sports?

**A:** I grew up on Six Mile in Detroit in a bad area. Both of my siblings and my parents were invested into sports, so they always made sure that they were a great support system and that I had everything I needed to be put into position to work hard and become

a great athlete.

**Q:** What was your journey to get to Ferris?

**A:** My journey to get to Ferris was simple. I just had to work on being me, staying dedicated to my craft and putting up great numbers on the field.

**Q:** What was the experience like earning a role on the team?

**A:** The process for earning the role was that you had to redshirt as a freshman. Then you have to earn the respect of the team. You have to work hard because everybody [on the team] is good.

**Q:** There was a sentiment by your teammate Tyrese Hunt-Thompson that the wide-receiver group from this season was the best and most explosive group of players on the team, would you agree to that? Do you think the receiving core has peaked?

**A:** I would definitely agree that the receiving core is the best group on the team, but we definitely have not peaked. We have so many more pieces that haven't been used correctly.

**Q:** Do you anticipate more growth from the wide-receivers coming into next season?

**A:** I think that once next season comes around, it'll be simple to see that our group plays a huge part in winning games and it'll be clear that the receiving room is the best group on the team.

**Q:** What do you think are your most interesting and redeeming qualities are off the field?

**A:** Off the field, I think it's my ability to be approachable. I also think it's also my ability to adapt. I think my attitude is a good thing as well.



Photo courtesy of Emari O'Brien

O'Brien had 204 all-purpose yards and a rushing touchdown in 2023-24.

Scan to visit  
[ferris.edu/books](https://ferris.edu/books)



## SPRING TEXTBOOKS!

Shop the official Ferris online bookstore for all your course material needs; simply go to [ferris.edu/books](https://ferris.edu/books)



Online bookstore opens  
Monday, December 4th

Ferris State University is an equal opportunity institution. For information on the University's Policy on Non-Discrimination, visit [ferris.edu/non-discrimination](https://ferris.edu/non-discrimination).