

## AI students take flight

Michigan's first AI students launching at Ferris



Graphic generated by Adobe Firefly

Due to the nature of this story, the Torch Production team has decided to generate this image using AI.

**Tate Zellman**  
News Reporter

Two artificial intelligence students, given the names Ann and Fry, are being created to participate in class lectures, and will be enrolled this semester.

The AI students are invented through the development of artificial intelligence and evolving technology. They are operated by students and faculty who are part of the artificial intelligence, the information security and the software engineering degree programs. They were created at the FSU Center for Cybersecurity and Data Science. Once fully operational, they will be set to interact with professors, students and will complete assignments in hybrid classes.

The university is one of three colleges with graduating programs that involve artificial intelligence.

Associate Professor in Management Dr. Kasey Thompson is leading the initiative and development of Ann and Fry, acknowledging that fact and how it led to more faculty work with artificial intelligence to discover its beauty and uncertainty.

"Being one of the few colleges with graduating programs in artificial intelligence, we lead significant efforts on the record and off the record related to cybersecurity and artificial intelligence," said Thompson. "When we think about Ann and Fry, there are quite a few outcomes that we're hoping to accomplish from a goals perspective. But what makes this most exciting is that we don't know what we don't know and that's the pure nature of artificial intelligence."

Thompson mentioned that technology is changing constantly when it comes to artificial intelligence. Every couple hours, there's

an advancement or a breakthrough and that the programs involved in the creation of Ann and Fry are excited to experiment with the new AI technology.

Provost Bobby Fleischman, who's also the vice president for Academic Affairs, believes that Ann and Fry will help the university as a whole, but will benefit the students the most.

"Ann and Fry will help the university tell the story through the eyes of students," Fleischman said. "We have an opportunity to have the most important people on campus, who are the students, experience AI through the lens that has been created for Ann and Fry. I don't know that we know what it's going to be in the end, but we know it's going to be exciting."

Like Thompson, Fleischman also mentioned that technology is changing in artificial intelligence, but Fleischman stated that the

technology is developing really quickly with different iterations, which gives the programs opportunities to create and discover new things, including the AI students.

Fleischman also stated that the AI program was not just the first at the university, but also the first in the entire state. He found that to be a reason the development of Ann and Fry began by getting students and faculty to experiment with the technology.

"We have a great opportunity to educate students to attract through recruiting students because of us having the first AI program in the state of Michigan," Fleischman said. "We're leaders in so many different areas, and I think Ann and Fry will give us the opportunity to be even more creative and innovative."

Artificial intelligence sophomore Jhanvi Murugan gave her excitement, concerns and input on the

new AI students.

"I am really fascinated by the fact that we would be joined by two AI students," Murugan said. "As AI is a growing field with more newer changes coming, I think having students like Ann and Fry can significantly enrich our academic environment. The potential for more projects and research is something that really excites me. However, with the advancements there can be a lot of ethical concerns too. The social impact of how to keep a balance with these innovations and the development of AI with moral values and impacts on society."

Contact [COB@Ferris.edu](mailto:COB@Ferris.edu) to learn more about the artificial intelligence program and the AI students.

# News

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## FNTFO works to improve administrative relations

The non-tenure union's "strategic plan" for visibility and recognition

Jessica Oakes  
Editor in Chief

Following the Ferris Faculty Association's largely amicable contract cycle, another on-campus union is preparing for the negotiation table.

The Ferris Non-Tenure Faculty Organization voted to extend their current contract, pushing negotiations back one year to the spring of 2025.

FNTFO members now dedicate their time to strengthening relationships with university administrators such as President Bill Pink, Provost Bobby Fleischman and Associate Provost Steve Reifert.

"Our strategic plan, basically, is to be seen, and to have people know that we're on campus," FNTFO president Diane Jackson said. "We're doing the same work as tenured professors, but we are not recognized as such."

Jackson has seen a national "reluctance" to recognize non-tenured faculty members. Many in the FNTFO have worked full-time on nine-month contracts for over a decade. This impacts more than the faculty members' pay and sense of job security.

"We're moving to more meetings

now to talk about what fairness means to us and how we belong, or possibly do not," Jackson said. "What can we make better for students? Because the students are what we're here for. How are we recognized by the students? How do we contribute to being a bulldog?"

When students select their classes for an upcoming semester, they are often unable to see non-tenured professors' names attached to classes in the registration portal. This makes it much more difficult for a student to choose to take a class with a specific instructor.

Other difficulties that non-tenured faculty face vary by college and department. This has encouraged the FNTFO to regularly meet with deans from across campus.

"Every time we met with the deans, it was lovely just getting to know a little bit about the history and how the departments came about, what types of needs their faculty have," Jackson said. "If there any faculty that are not tenured or tenure track, we talk to them about their experiences so that we can have an understanding."

Denise Cospers is an English pro-

fessor and the FNTFO's vice president. In her department, Cospers' lack of tenure keeps her from sitting on hiring committees or voting on departmental policies.

Cospers called the union's current relationship with the administration "mostly non-contentious." FNTFO's leadership meets with Associate Provost Reifert and Michael Garrity, Ferris' director of labor relations, on a monthly basis.

"And while there have been some moments of contentiousness over the last year and a half, I mean, that's to be expected. When you're thinking about negotiation type things... we are working on keeping that relationship where we can communicate with each other, and not have it be rude or ugly," Cospers said.

Reifert stands in place of Provost Fleischman in nearly all labor relations meetings with Ferris' unions. He appreciates the unit's willingness to work together.

"[The FNTFO] are very agreeable [and] accommodating of big changes we made last year, and it's because of the collaborative nature. So, it's a very positive relationship," Reifert said.

Provost Fleischman has met with the FNTFO this academic

year. In his opinion, there is currently no disparity between the treatment of a tenured professor and a non-tenured professor.

"Not from my perspective," Fleischman said. "Treat people the same. That is as well as we can possibly treat people, regardless of whether they're tenured, tenure

track or non-tenure track faculty. All faculty are integral to the mission of the university and serving our students."

Fleischman called his relationship with the FNTFO "very cordial" and has stated he will continue to meet with the unit "as the opportunities present themselves."



Graphic courtesy of Denise Cospers



Photo from Torch Archives

Current FNTFO president Diane Jackson poses with Charles Bacon and Paul Zube at the 2022 10-year anniversary lunch.

# Welding program receives record scholarship amounts



Photo credit: Jack Starkey | Photographer

**Mason Wegener, a freshman in the welding and engineering program, demonstrates some of the skills he's learned while attending Ferris State University.**

**Kourtney Fairchild**  
News Reporter

Ferris welding engineering students received \$319,000 in scholarships from the American Welding Society, marking a new record for the university.

According to program director Jeffrey Carney, Ferris welding students received 122 of the 716 available AWS scholarships. This means Ferris welding students received 17% of scholarships.

The welding engineering program at Ferris is nationally recognized with 55 graduates last year, more than any other school in the country.

"We have over 1,000 graduates out there in just about every indus-

try that utilizes welding in over forty countries," Carney said.

Since 1986, Ferris welding students have received a total of over \$2.9 million in scholarships from the AWS.

To apply for these scholarships, students must first be a member of the American Welding Society by signing up on their website and paying a small fee. Students then create an academic profile and upload their transcripts. Students are then able to apply for national, district and section and district named scholarships they qualify for.

National scholarships are the highest and range from \$2,500 to \$8,000 and above, district

scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 and above and section and district named scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

Welding engineering technology senior Victoria Hall was the recipient of the William A. Rice Family Women in Welding scholarship.

"I'd say for more than half of the scholarships, all you have to do is type your name and submit so it makes it really easy on the student," Hall said. "I honestly wish more people would do it because it's so easy and it's a very reliable scholarship."

Hall said she decided to go to college after leaving the military and the financial aspect of starting college was something she was worried about. Over the four years

in her degree, Hall has received about 10 AWS scholarships totaling roughly \$25,000.

"I'm no longer in the military, but I'm getting these AWS scholarships so I'm able to go through college," Hall said. "I have no student debt because of these scholarships."

For some scholarships, a short one-to-two paragraph essay about what getting the scholarship would mean for the student is required. Additionally, two recommendations are required to apply for national scholarships.

Welding engineering technology senior Cody Langlois was the recipient of the Robert G. and Annette H. Pali ESAB Scholarship.

"Having the opportunity to even

apply for this much money through a single organization is just amazing," Langlois said.

Both Hall and Langlois stressed how much AWS scholarships have helped them in their college careers.

"I've gotten American Welding Society scholarships every year, and if it wasn't for those scholarships, I probably would not have been through the whole program," Langlois said.

Applications for 2024 AWS national, section and district scholarships are open now at [aws.org](http://aws.org), and the deadline to apply is March 1.

## Next editon, look for a recap of these MLK events:

- Ferris' first time fully closed for MLK Day
- MLK Day Choir performance
- MLK Day March
- Keynote Speaker Sybrina Fulton

# Minimum wage increase Q&A



Graphic from Torch Archives

**Ember St. Amour**  
News Editor

Prepare for a minimum wage increase from \$10.10 to \$10.33 with Associate Vice President of Human Resources Fredericka Hayes.

**What's Ferris going to look like this coming year with the new changes to minimum wage?**

Minimum wage changes every January 1 currently under Michigan law. So when that comes into place, we look and review which employee groups because it's not necessarily always students

are below that minimum wage, and what we do on our site, because that's an automatic change by law, we put together lists and make those changes automatic automatically to the system of effective the minimum wage implementation date, so it's the January one. So, there it's just a process for us, to be honest, because it's one required by law, and we look to see who's below and just make that move. So, no department has to individually do anything. It's just a process change, and we want to make sure that it occurs to everyone that is affected.

**Do you do anything with people who are making above minimum wage?**

We don't do anything. So, in terms of student employment, if you look on the student employment website, there's pay bands, those determinations of where positions sit. HR is involved with in that conversation with groups based on a position, not necessarily individuals. So, positions have pay bans. So if someone is in a pay band and a supervisor may want a position change or individual change, there's a process that they go through for submitting that change and when

reviewing do they have budget because those have to be paid for and then if I pay band changes, if they want a difference between pay bands, what is the justification for that, making sure that everyone in a similar type position in a department is moved not just the individual so there's processes that we do for pay reviews that are outside what occurs in terms of a state law.

**Is there anything specific that you feel like students should know about this just as they're going into the new year and might see these changes?**

I always encourage anybody

that when there's a change, look at your pay stub, and does it make sense to you about what's on that pay stub? You know, based on the number of hours you make etcetera, are based on number of hours you work? Does it match what you what your expectation is of what that change is? So, it's not just a minimum wage, I would say you know, sometimes it's position change. It's the start of the year. I always encourage everyone to look at your price up. Make sure that it has on it what you're expecting, and obviously if it doesn't, then you would contact HR we'd investigate.

## MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

**Dylan Rider**  
Sports Editor

The Detroit Lions won their first playoff game in 32 years with a 24-23 victory over the Los Angeles Rams at Ford Field on Sunday, Jan. 14.

The Lions' 32 years without a postseason victory was the longest drought held in the National Football League, a dishonor which is now held by the Miami Dolphins.

The heavily anticipated playoff win for Detroit came against their former franchise quarterback, Matthew Stafford. The long-time Lions quarterback was traded to the Los Angeles Rams on Jan. 30, 2021.

Stafford, who was selected first overall in the 2009 draft and spent 12 years in the Motor City, was met with a roar of boos. Before the match-up, Stafford knew the return would be a cold reception.

"I'm the bad guy coming to town," Stafford said. "I'm on the other team."

On the other side of the victory, Lions quarterback Jared Goff, who was sent to Detroit in the Stafford trade, received a chant of his name when he took the field. Goff threw for 277 yards with one passing touchdown.

In a post-game locker room video, Jared Goff was given the game ball for the victory and spoke with his team.

"I love and appreciate you guys more than you f\*\*king know, I promise you that. I love you guys so f\*\*king much," Goff said. "This is just the beginning, boys. This is just the f\*\*king beginning."

The Detroit Lions will host another playoff game at Ford Field on Sunday, Jan. 21 at 3 p.m. They will play the winner of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Philadelphia Eagles' playoff game.

## GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

**Ember St. Amour**  
News Editor

**Iceland:** A volcano erupted on Sunday on the Reykjavik peninsula, which caused lava to spill into the town of Grindavik.

The eruption began at 8 a.m. on Sunday and followed several earthquakes. Icelandic President Gudni Thorlacius Johannesson addressed the nation Sunday evening.

"Lava is flowing into Grindavik, a thriving town where people have built their lives," Johannesson said.

The town was evacuated earlier in the weekend, with as there was anticipation for the eruption according to The Washington Post.

Rakel Lind is a personal trainer who had to evacuate according to NBC News.

"I was raised [knowing] that Reykjanes would crack from Iceland ... but I never thought it was actually going to happen," Lind said.

Residents had been able to move back into the town following a different volcano that had happened on Dec. 18, and residents had been allowed back on Dec. 22, before having to evacuate again on Saturday. While the lava slowed Monday, it still caused damage to several houses in Grindavik according to BBC News. This eruption was the fifth one to have happened since 2021.

# Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

## OMSS students choose new leadership



Photo courtesy of Byron Brooks

Newly appointed Assistant Director Byron Brooks.



Photo courtesy of Michael Hopson

The new Director of the Multicultural Student Services, Michael Hopson.

**Brook Blausey**  
Culture Reporter

After a whole semester of students fully running the Office of Multicultural Student Services, Ferris welcomes new director Michael Hopson and assistant director Byron Brooks into their positions.

While trying to restaff the office, the OMSS members collectively chose who gets to fill the two positions. All student workers were invited to join the final candidates for lunch and were then asked to fill out an anonymous survey after interacting with them. The survey showed that students felt Hopson and Brooks were the best fit for the job.

Hopson was previously the director of the Upward-Bound program at Grand Rapids Community College and the assistant director of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics program at Michigan State University. When

he heard that the OMSS Director position at Ferris was open, he knew this was an opportunity to utilize his leadership skills.

"This job was a good fit for my goals which are being able to enhance and improve the lives of students," Hopson said. "I want to be able to help students become who they see themselves being."

One of Hopson's goals that he hopes to achieve for OMSS as their new director is to expand and improve relationships with the campus community.

**"I want to put the multi back in multicultural student,"**

Hopson said. "I want this to be an opportunity for all students to have a voice, a sense of belonging and a place here on campus, where they can pretty much have

their needs catered to on the emotional, social, academic and personal level."

Hopson wants to make OMSS a much friendlier place for students to come and "let their hair down."

The new assistant director Byron Brooks is a Ferris alumnus and also a previously experienced leader. Fellow alumni who have seen Brooks' leadership skills in action encouraged him to apply for this position.

"I thought this would be a good opportunity to pour into the next generation of leaders on Ferris' campus," Brooks said.

Brooks has spent the first week on campus trying to "connect" with the students and OMSS members to begin the process of "building relationships" on campus. As a new campus member, he has felt welcomed and wants others to feel the same.

"My first step is connecting with the students, finding out what are some of their needs and then do-

ing what I can to utilize my power as a resource to break down barriers," Brooks said. "And also to build bridges across campus to be able to forward to the students throughout their collegiate journey."

Although Brooks has a lot planned for OMSS, his ideas don't stop just at the OMSS office. He hopes to collaborate with many of the multicultural groups and leadership across campus so he can help support multicultural students during their time at Ferris and "spread community" to the students across campus.

"Conversations that OMSS is promoting are the conversations that need to be had all around campus, not just in one office," Brooks said. "I want to expand these conversations outside of this office and outside of the classrooms. That way these conversations can spread across the community and our campus so that we can truly support our mul-

ticultural students."

Health administration and public health senior Autumn Peoples has been a member of OMSS since 2019 and has been the student manager since 2021. As she's looking forward to this new era of leadership, she's also excited for OMSS to have a "great support system."

"OMSS is our home away from home so having a director and assistant director again makes a huge difference." Peoples said. "They can help the students get connected to the people and resources they need and when they need them."

With Hopson and Byron in office, Peoples feels like things are going to get "back to normal."

"I want OMSS to be a place where anyone can come, not just one group of people," Hopson said. "A safe space for anyone to come and just be themselves and have their needs taken care of."



Martin Luther King Day Monday Jan. 15

Look out for more coverage in our coming Jan. 24 edition.

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# Student Spotlight

Arjun Manoj



Manoj pictured in front of the Fillmore, located in Detroit, MI.

Photo courtesy of Arjun Manoj

**Kendall Phillips**  
Culture Reporter

Arjun Manoj has never been a fan of staying in the same place for a long period, which led to his decision to travel across the world for college.

Manoj is a freshman studying computer network engineering. He's originally from India but grew up in the Middle Eastern country Qatar.

After applying to numerous schools all over the world, he landed on the decision to come to the United States due to it being the best fit for him "culturally." Manoj has had the chance to learn and try many new things, as well as make some lifelong friends.

According to Manoj, the best thing he has experienced as an international student are the friends he has made along the way.

He has felt an overwhelming amount of support from his friends here in the U.S., especially when he was missing home. Anytime he would feel homesick and would be missing his friends and family back in India, he would always lean on his new friends to comfort him.

"I love the friends that I have made here," Manoj said. "They are just amazing. They helped make my move here so much easier because they have made me feel at home."

Manoj spent both holiday breaks with his close Ferris friends. He has not been back to India since his move, which has been very difficult for him due to not being able to see his family and friends.

Television digital and media production freshman Marcus Ransom Jr. has enjoyed and cherished the friendship he has made with Manoj since starting school.

"The best thing about being friends with [Arjun] is that he's always very understanding," Ransom said. "I get to spend 24/7 with him and I'm so glad to call him a friend."

Ransom explained that he has got to learn a lot from Manoj. Manoj has shared parts of his culture with him and has had him try authentic Indian food.

"It means a lot to me that I was

able to bond with someone that is from a completely different culture and a different way of life," Ransom said. "He has adapted well to this new environment. He will be able to go back to his country and be able to talk about the things he learned and saw with other people."

He greatly misses his family and friends back home, but another big thing he misses from India is the food. He would describe most of the food in the U.S. as "bland," but found out that he's a big fan of chili.

Dental hygiene freshman Dominick Burkhardt is another close friend of Manoj. He would explain Manoj as a very "open-minded person" and an "overall great friend."

Burkhardt has had many memorable experiences with Manoj, but his favorites have been the times when they would study together, helping each other out in any way needed.

"I am very glad that Arjun decided to come to school here," Burkhardt said. "I had never had a friend from another country, so it has been interesting to be friends with someone who is both very different yet similar to me."

Many things in the U.S. were greatly different from those in India. Manoj explained how schooling in the U.S. is much less challenging than it was back home in India.

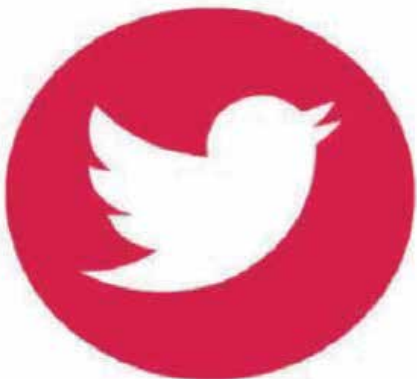
"Back home, I took a lot of advanced classes and even though I'm doing the advanced classes here too, it is just easier," Manoj said. "There is less stress here for me, which is very good."

Manoj had also never heard of the concept of younger people working and saving money, which is something he found interesting about the U.S.

"Ninety-nine percent of our parents pay for our tuition," Manoj said. "Working at such a young age and saving money was a thing that I only found in the U.S. Which, in my opinion, is one of the best things, it kind of inspired me."

Manoj is extremely glad he decided to come to the U.S. for school and very grateful for the opportunities and friendships he has made.

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# Snow storm sweet tooth

“I have always felt a big responsibility to our community,” Carleen Rose said

**Giuliana Denicolo**  
Culture Editor

With 11 inches of snow and single-digit temperatures, Kilwins owners Carleen and Brian Rose decided to keep their store open during a winter weather advisory as a place for community helpers to warm up with free hot drinks and fudge.

On Friday, Jan. 12, Carleen posted on the Ask Big Rapids Facebook page alerting the town that Kilwins would stay open this past weekend from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Carleen hoped Kilwins would be the go-to place for police officers, linemen and public and private community members who snow plow to “take a break.”

“I have always felt a big responsibility to our community,” Carleen said. “And so, we try to be open when our community needs us. We live very close to our store, so we can walk to work. I’m not sure how many places are going to be open, and I thought we could provide a nice cozy place for them to come in.”

She wanted the store to be a spot for everyone out there who’s “trying to make things as safe as possible” for everyone else. As a community member and business owner, she feels that there’s a responsibility to do the best you can.

“[Big Rapids] has always been a close-knit community and everybody pitches in and does their part,” Carleen said. “I just want to do something that lets them know that we really recognize and care what they do.”

Brian felt as though staying open was a “given” as he and Carleen wanted to be open for their customers and the community.

Since the couple is within walking distance from their store, they called off the rest of their staff to keep them safe and avoid any accidents when coming into work. She feels “blessed” that they could safely get to their store during this weather.

“It’s just me and my husband. We’re hanging out here like the team that we are...” Carleen said. “We would never have our employees take a chance to come out in weather like this. The key thing for us is that we don’t have to worry about driving.”

Though only a couple of people needed it, according to Brian, staying open and giving away free hot drinks and fudge for those who help the community was easy.

“That was not a hard decision,” Brian said. “People that are out there doing their job maybe need a place to go if some places did decide to close today.”

Carleen’s Facebook post received over 700 reactions and over 100 comments that thanked and praised them for staying open. As she went through responding to all comments, one stuck out to her in particular that made her “emotional.”

“You guys are the best stop in town,” Sara Affolder wrote. “I hope every child within walking distance comes to see you... I wonder if you guys ever knew how much we loved you then and now.”

Carleen hopes that the community is respectful to all of the people out there “trying their best to make sure that everything is safe.” She feels lucky to have people who are willing to do that for their community because “it’s not all that easy.”



Photo courtesy of Carleen Rose

Visitors watch Brian Rose prepare fresh, handmade fudge.



Photo courtesy of Carleen Rose

The owners of the Big Rapids Kilwins, Brian and Carleen Rose.



Parker Turngate is a marketing junior who created this survey as a way for Ferris students to speak on the diversity of the campus. To share your opinion and experiences, scan the QR code below to take the anonymous survey. All responses are welcomed and appreciated!



Scan here to take  
the Diverse Dogs Survey

# Opinions

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

#### Our Location:

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

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN:

# Why I boycott

The press, privilege and purchasing power



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

### Jessica Oakes

Editor-In-Chief

No matter how easy it is to feel helpless while reading about another war, I believe it is important to remember the power of our own wallets.

The world put their eyes on Israel and Palestine like never before on Oct. 7. As a journalist and a history student who has spent months studying the origins and effects of genocide, I am deeply alarmed by every development of the war on Gaza.

In December, the Committee to Protect Journalists stated that the first 10 weeks of this war were the deadliest for journalists in recorded history. We have never seen more reporters killed in one location in a single year. The CPJ's Dec. 21 report stated that 61 out of the 68 reporters killed in the war were Palestinian.

"The Israeli army has killed

more journalists in 10 weeks than any other army or entity has in any single year. And with every journalist killed, the war becomes harder to document and to understand," Sherif Mansour, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator said.

I can not stand for the belief that these actions are too far out of our reach to care or act. Of course, we are limited by geography, but there are few messages clearer than that of a dissenting consumer.

Thinking locally, there are several brands and products in Big Rapids that have been identified by the BDS movement. According to their website, the "Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement works to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians and pressure Israel to comply with international law."

These brands and products include McDonald's, Burger King

and Sabra hummus. While it is not on BDS's boycott list, many have sworn off Starbucks after the brand sued Workers United for posting pro-Palestinian messages online.

Whether its Starbucks today, or Amazon and Chick-fil-A for the past several years, some people love to remind me that boycotts never work because other people will still buy the products. Not only is this historically inaccurate, but it also ignores a large portion of the ideology behind brand boycotts.

The Times Square Investment Journal reported in December that Starbucks stock declined nearly 7.5% over the course of a month, reflecting a \$12 billion loss in market value. While holiday marketing campaigns saw an increase in revenue, the bump proved to be smaller than in previous years.

A well-organized boycott is one of the most powerful forms of non-violent resistance that aver-

age people have at our disposal. I emphasize "well-organized," because people today miss that mark.

Even if I will never single-handedly cripple a corporation's revenue, a boycott reminds me that I am in control of where my finances go. I have the privilege of choosing alternatives or going without these brands entirely.

We are lucky that the BDS has called for a boycott of so many commodities. The difference in my life after cutting out Starbucks, McDonald's and Domino's is so slight, even in a town with few food options.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott of the 1950s, probably the most well-known boycott in American history, directly impacted peoples' ability to get to work for months on end. It shows a real drop in dedication when today, people can hardly choose to buy their coffee from a different chain.

# Calling out the entertainment industry

Shining a spotlight on how the industry treats women

### Harmony Goodman

Production Manager

The Golden Globes, an annual film and television media award ceremony, aired on the January 7th. The host, comedian Jo Koy, left many, including me, angry. The backlash he has since received highlights an underlining issue about how the industry treats women.

The controversy started when Koy introduced the nominees for this year's "Cinematic and Box Office Achievement." During his speech he said that "'Oppenheimer' is based on a 721 page

Pulitzer Prize winning book about the Manhattan Project, and 'Barbie' is on a plastic doll with big boobies." He followed up his comment by saying "the key moment in Barbie is when she goes from perfect beauty to bad breath, cellulite and flat feet, or what casting directors call a character actor."

His apparent joke wasn't met with a good response from the crowd as well as the internet.

I find myself still in disbelief that "Barbie," a feminist movie that shows just how hard it is to be a woman who can never meet the never-ending list of expectations that make up the "ideal woman,"

is presented by a host with no acknowledgment towards the actual movies purpose and instead with a sexual comment.

After witnessing this and being just as disappointed as other women are right now around the world, I conclude that no matter how successful a woman is they will always be made as a joke by the industry.

We see evidence of this everywhere when it comes to comments about Taylor Swift who is receiving online bash about an overdramatic reaction. She made a face and took a sip of wine after another comment made by Koy about her

camera time at the Kansas City Chiefs football games recently, where she was only there to support her boyfriend, Travis Kelce.

I believe that we all have rights to the way we feel. What I don't agree with is an unnecessary comment or an act of violence as a reaction.

Why is it that a silent response by Swift is seen by the public as overdramatic

CONT ON PG. 9



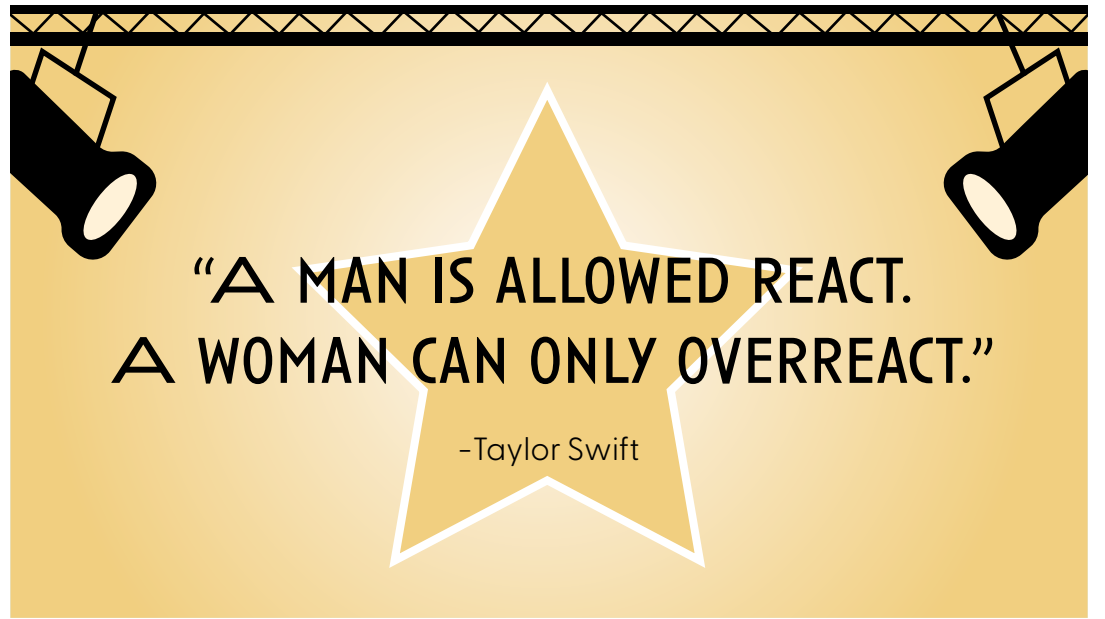
**CALLING OUT THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY CONT.**

while Will Smith can go on stage and physically assault a host over a joke while yelling profanities and only receive a shortlasting backlash from the media. This is seen as a funny moment that was posted to the internet.

As a woman, I've been called overdramatic my whole life about things I've been upset by. This is why I truly do agree with the statement made by Swift in 2019 where she said, "When a man does something it's strategic but if a woman does the same thing, it's calculated. A man is allowed to react. A woman can only overreact."

The industry has a lot to work on and the fact that these jokes were approved to be in the Golden Globes is just all the more reason to pay close attention to the way the industry treats women. This is why I think it is important that we don't stop talking about what happened at the Golden Globes, the industry depends on us as the audience. The more we call out the industry for their actions the more they will be forced to listen and change.

"Barbie" did end up winning the "Cinematic and Box Office Achievement", which is a definite win for women as a whole. I am just let down that "Barbie" won, but only after a man could make one last sexist joke.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

# Christopher Moltisanti: without an arc

How the fan favorite "Sopranos" character couldn't change



Graphic by: Lucas Gill | Web Editor

Lucas Gill  
Web Editor

*This article contains spoilers for "The Sopranos."*

"The Sopranos," commonly regarded as one of the greatest and most important television series, has hit its 25th anniversary this past week. One of HBO's most popular series created by David Chase, "The Sopranos" follows New Jersey mob boss Tony Soprano and shows how he balances everyday life, in and out of the crime scene and how the people around him change.

I have recently finished watching the show for the first time before the new year. While I believe that it has some of the best examples of character writing and development in television, one character quickly became my favorite to watch: Tony's nephew Christopher Moltisanti.

With practically every character developing or changing in a certain way, the same cannot be said about Christopher. I realized that his character never changes, with his blind loyalty bringing his downfall.

Christopher's inability to change

was the real reason for his death. After being given multiple chances to leave the life of crime and move on with his life, he refuses and cements himself.

I will be discussing the show, season-by-season, and discuss the moments that have affected Christopher over the story's seven-year timeline and show how he doesn't develop.

## Season One

Christopher was introduced in the series pilot as Tony's personal driver and enforcer for the Soprano family. In his late 20s, Christopher is shown as ambitious. Midway through the season, Christopher has shown signs of depression, but Tony blowing his concerns off as a lack of sleep.

"The Sopranos" displays the more conservative and dismissive feelings that older generations had about mental health in the late 90's and early 2000's, with the attitude towards Christopher's condition being a prime example throughout the show.

Another seed of Christopher's eventual downfall comes with the murder of Emil Kolar, a manager of a rival sanitation company that was involved in a bidding war

against the family. The act led him to suffer from several nightmares. This affected the only thing Christopher was passionate about outside of the world of crime: movies and screenwriting.

While studying screenwriting during the first two seasons, Christopher compares himself to movie characters. In one of my favorite scenes from the season, he discusses character arcs. He bears his soul to Paulie Gualtieri, an older captain in the family, and wonders about when his arc will come and what he will become.

## Season Two

Season two begins with Christopher being put in charge of the family's Webistics branch, using multiple stock market scams to earn for the Soprano family. He takes two men, Matthew Bevilacqua and Sean Gismonte, under his wing, performing side jobs with the two. These men, ambitious in their own rights, reflect the aspirations Christopher had in season one.

Another big plot point in the season comes with the return of Tony's old friend Richie Aprile from prison. Richie had a stake of his own in the family and would con-

stantly defy Tony throughout the season. These points would converge when Matthew and Sean decide to betray Christopher and whack him to rise the ranks under Richie.

The plan goes awry, with Sean dying in the crossfire and Christopher surviving, being shot twice. Christopher is rushed to the hospital, at one point being declared dead for four minutes. After a grueling recovery and losing a spleen, Christopher returns to screenwriting with the help of his girlfriend and future fiancé, Adriana La Cerva.

He later tells the crew that he saw himself in either hell or purgatory, with him seeing his late father. At the season finale, Tony gives Chris an ultimatum between the family business or pursuing his screenwriting career. Christopher, ever loyal to his uncle, chooses the former, further sealing his eventual fate.

## Season Three

This season was another big step for Christopher. At the beginning of the season, Christopher becomes a made man in the Soprano crew. As the ceremony commences, he notices a crow in the windowsill and takes it as a bad omen.

With his promotion comes more responsibility. Chris controls a local betting shop and has to make weekly payments to his captain, Paulie. This is the start of a divide between the two men, with them butting heads over money and business decisions.

## Season Four

After Paulie gets arrested on a gun charge, Christopher is made a temporary captain by Tony. The added stress pushes Chris' drug addiction. While we see bits and pieces of Christopher's use of heroin throughout the show, he loses himself to it, with Tony eventually finding out.

After a dramatic family intervention, Tony makes sure Christopher is sent to a rehab clinic. Tony has a couple enforcers of the family stay nearby to watch Chris' recovery, implying that he will be killed if he attempted to leave rehab early. By the end of the season, Christopher recovers, swearing off drug use and alcohol.

## Season Five

A few months after the previous season, Christopher was put in charge of a cigarette smuggling operation. Meanwhile, Tony and Adriana were involved in a car accident, and rumors spread about how the two were cheating behind Christopher's back.

When Christopher found out, he got drunk and pulled a gun on Tony. After disarming him, Tony was ready to kill his own nephew when their mutual cousin, Tony Blundetto, stepped in and saved Christopher's life.

After returning to North Jersey, Adriana admits to Christopher that she was an FBI informant for the past year. She fought to protect him while willingly giving information on Tony to the government. Despite this, Christopher chooses his uncle over his fiancé, leading to Adriana's fate.

## Season Six (parts 1 and 2)

Christopher is officially promoted to being a captain for the family. A year after Adriana's death, he meets and marries a woman named Kelli Lombardo. The two plan to start a family, with them having a daughter in part two.

Christopher returns to his screenwriting ambitions, convincing the crew that there is a lot of potential profit to be made. While working on this, he distances himself from the business and criminal lifestyle. Christopher premieres his film, "Clever," with his original take on a mobster movie featuring some subtle counterparts to some of the family members, including Tony.

Christopher would meet his end in episode 18 of the season. He and Tony get into a car accident after Chris loses control of the vehicle. Christopher sustains terrible injuries, but Tony, much luckier with his own injuries, makes the impulsive decision to take out Chris, and suffocates him.

This character study just goes to show how incredibly complex "The Sopranos" is just by looking through the lens of one character. This will always be one of my favorite shows, with Christopher being my favorite character, even though he never got his arc.

# Sports

Dylan Rider | Sports Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

## Bulldog hockey left frostbitten

Bulldogs swept by Minnesota State Mavericks on the road



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Forward player Connor McGrath rushes to the puck during last Friday's game at Minnesota State University.

**Connor Grypma**  
Sports Reporter

The Bulldogs lost both matchups this weekend on the road

against the Minnesota State Mavericks on Friday, Jan. 12 and Saturday, Jan. 13.

Ferris (6-16-1, 4-11 in CCHA) had lost their previous two match-

ups to the Mavericks (11-8-3, 7-4-1 in CCHA) earlier this season and continued that streak by losing 4-2 on Friday, and 4-0 on Saturday.

Head coach Bob Daniels addressed what he wanted to see from his team going into the tough series.

"We want to get some quick, early exits out of our zone," Daniels said. "They're a real handful when they've got the puck in your end so we can't get bogged down in there. They're generating a lot of scoring chances, so we need to continue to play well on the penalty kill too."

The Bulldogs stumbled out of the gate on Friday, falling into a 2-0 deficit before freshman forward Emerson Goode scored a goal of his own early in the second period to bring the Bulldogs within striking distance. The Mavericks extended their lead back to two at the start of the third before the Bulldogs quickly combated with a goal by senior forward Jason Brancheau to make the score 3-2. The rest of the final period turned into

a defensive battle before the Mavericks scored on an empty netter with less than a minute remaining to make the final score 4-2.

Brancheau, who scored his ninth goal of the season on Friday, believes special teams miscues got in the team's way of winning on Friday.

"We played well enough to win," Brancheau said. "It came down to our special teams giving up two goals while we were on the power play and another on the penalty kill."

In the loss, senior goaltender Logan Stein stopped 29-of-32 shots. One of Stein's saves was featured as sixth on SportsCenter's top ten plays as he had a swift backdoor save late in the second period.

Stein broke down the play while believing the SportsCenter highlight would be something he won't forget.

"It bounced back to their guy on the back door and I kinda just made a reactionary save," Stein said. "It's something I'll tell my kids about when I'm older. I'll be

bragging about it to them."

On Saturday, the Bulldogs didn't fare any better than the previous night. The Mavericks jumped out to a 3-0 lead after the first period, and Ferris couldn't get anything going offensively. Minnesota State added another goal midway through the second period and the score remained through the third period as the Bulldogs fell 4-0.

"Obviously, we want to win more. We played well on Friday, but we did not play well on Saturday," Daniels said. "Saturday was just not a good game for us. We kind of hung on to walk out of there 4-0. We just didn't have our legs. I'm still encouraged with this team, I've seen some really good things."

The Bulldogs will return home on Friday, Jan. 19 for a contest against the Lake Superior State Lakers before going on the road to play the Lakers on Saturday, Jan. 20. Puck drop is set for 7:07 p.m. on Friday, and 6:07 p.m. on Saturday.

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# Ups and Downs in the U.P.

Ferris men's basketball defeated by Northern Michigan after a win against Michigan Tech



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Senior guard Amari Lee breezes past an opposing player during the game against Kuyper college.

Jack Alcorn  
Sports Reporter

For this week's games, the Ferris State men's basketball team traveled to the Upper Peninsula where they defeated the Michigan Tech Huskies on Thursday, Jan. 11 before losing to the Northern Michigan Wildcats on Saturday, Jan. 13.

The Bulldogs' (13-3, 3-2 in GLIAC) 69-68 victory over the Hus-

kies (5-10, 2-4 in GLIAC) saw a game-winning shot from junior guard Ethan Erickson with six seconds left to play.

After the win on Thursday, head coach Andy Bronkema gave his thoughts on his team's resilience and Erickson's game-winning basket.

"We defended pretty well, so we were able to hang in there and the boys showed a lot of poise down

the stretch," Bronkema said. "Jack [Ammerman] hit a game-winner earlier this year, so we wanted it to be in his hands. We set a good hook screen for Ethan, he got open and he drained it."

In the first half, four Bulldogs all had two or more fouls which forced Bronkema to go to his bench. Despite this, Ferris got out to a 10-point lead with nine minutes remaining in the half. The Huskies

came storming back to tie, going into halftime due to aggressiveness on the offensive boards. The Bulldogs got out-rebounded by seven and gave up eight offensive rebounds in the half.

In the second half, the Huskies were more aggressive and continued their domination of the boards. Michigan Tech built an eight-point lead with less than five minutes in the half. Ferris battled back thanks to a bench that out-scored the Huskies bench by 33. With the game coming down to the final possession, the Bulldogs had the ball out of bounds and fed Erickson who hit the corner three to take the lead. The Huskies were forced to take a full-court shot as time expired giving Ferris a 69-68 win and extending their winning streak to seven games.

Two days after their first Upper Peninsula win, the Bulldogs traveled to Marquette to play a red-hot Northern Michigan Wildcats (13-5, 6-0 in GLIAC) team that had won eight straight games. Ultimately, the Bulldogs fell to the Wildcats 75-71.

Heading into the Northern Michigan game, Bronkema felt his team was ready for a battle despite the Wildcats' strong start to the season.

"Northern Michigan is undefeat-

ed in conference play and returning a lot of guys from the national tournament team," Bronkema said. "We didn't fare so well last year, but this is a brand-new team and hopefully we will give them a great game."

To start the game, Ferris came out on top in the first half with a two-point lead thanks to a 16-point performance by Erickson. Once again, Ferris was out-rebounded, which helped the Wildcats take 13 more free throws than Ferris. Despite the rebound and free throw difference, the Bulldogs and the Wildcats were neck and neck. In the final possessions, Northern Michigan hit a couple of free throws and a three that ended up giving them a 75-71 victory over the Bulldogs.

Even after this road trip, Erickson continued his scoring run. In the past seven games, he is averaging 18 points a game while playing less than 25 minutes all the games. In all but one of the games, he scored less than 15 points and scored his season-high 36 against Kuyper.

The Bulldogs will head back home to face off against Davenport on Thursday, Jan. 18, and play their in-state rivals Grand Valley State University on Saturday, Jan. 20.

## Bulldogs bite Huskies and Wildcats

Women's basketball sweeps Tech and Northern in Upper Peninsula battles



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Guard Kadyn Blanchard prepares for a jump shot against D'Youville University.

Jael Snowden  
Sports Reporter

Ferris State women's basketball completed an Upper Peninsula sweep with victories over the Michigan Tech Huskies on Thursday, Jan. 11 and the Northern Michigan Wildcats on Saturday, Jan. 13.

To begin their slate of games up north, the Bulldogs (10-2, 4-1 in GLIAC) secured a 66-54 win over the Huskies (7-7, 3-3 in GLIAC).

Ferris State started the game aggressively, getting to the free throw line multiple times and going after the ball on the defensive end racking up seven steals by the end of the first half. This led to the Bulldogs going up 18 points on the Huskies in the second quarter.

Mallory McCartney was a big contributor to the first-half lead, as she was responsible for four of the seven first-half steals. She also paired the steals with three assists and five points before the third quarter began.

McCartney knew the challenge ahead of the team when playing up north while knowing what needed to happen for the team to win.

"These games are huge, going to the Upper Peninsula is always hard and both Tech and Northern are great teams," McCartney said.

"Going up there and winning will continue to enhance the confidence this team has. Doing the little things right will determine how successful we are against both squads. We have so much talent so it comes down to discipline on both ends of the court and also just having fun with it."

McCartney finished the game leading the team in minutes played (36), assists (five) and steals (four).

The Bulldogs finished their Upper Peninsula series by taming the Wildcats with a 79-67 win.

The Bulldogs started this outing more evenly matched, both teams were tied with each other several times and the lead swapped hands six times throughout the contest. The game was close and competitive until the fourth quarter when the Bulldogs erupted and scored 34 points to the Wildcats 24 points in that fourth quarter. Just as McCartney said, this game came down to the "little things" and the team that executed the little things better was the squad that came out on top.

Head coach Kurt Westendorp was ecstatic to secure these two important "separating wins" and how the team battled through a cold environment with winter

storms affecting Michigan.

"I'm proud of our girls. I don't think many teams will come in here and win," Westendorp said. "This is one of these wins that can really propel us forward in March ... You embrace the environment and you embrace the weather. You gotta play in tough environments and play good teams. We never really shied away from it. We have a lot of girls on the team that are seniors and we're like, 'Hey, this is your last Upper Peninsula trip and you wanna make it a memorable one.'"

Sophomore forward Mya Hiram led the Bulldogs in scoring in the Bulldogs victory over the Wildcats with 22 points.

With these two interconference wins, the Bulldogs set themselves up for great seed positioning come playoff time, but the job is still not finished.

Next, the Bulldogs will ride this momentum into another back-to-back GLIAC games, this time at home against Davenport University on Jan. 18 at 5:30 p.m.

The Bulldogs will return home, splitting the weekend with the Davenport Panthers on Thursday, Jan. 18, and their arch-rival Grand Valley State Lakers on Saturday, Jan. 20.

# COACH'S CORNER: Mark Doren

Tennis head coach talks season break, what the teams have worked on and 2024 goals

Jeffery Walker  
Sports Reporter

Bulldog tennis is close to starting their season back up from where they left off in the fall, with an exhibition against Western Michigan on Wednesday, Jan. 17.

Before the team's exhibition match, head coach Mark Doren sat down with the Torch and spoke on the difficulty of picking the season up after a long break, what the teams have worked on and the team's expectations and goals for the season.

**Q:** Explain how challenging it may be to stop the season from the fall standpoint and then pick it back up in the spring.

**A:** We're pretty fortunate to be a sport that gets to compete in both semesters, but it gets people excited in the fall to compete. The hard stop for about six weeks is pretty difficult. Sometimes our bodies need the rest, but we get so into it that we want to keep going. It's difficult, but the players have come back, ready to go already.

**Q:** What are some of the things that both teams worked on during this brief break in the season? What are both teams looking forward to in this spring season?

**A:** I think that both teams are very excited about the season. We didn't lose anybody from the roster on the men's team from last year and nobody from the women's lineup either. We've only added players, so we're in a really good spot. One thing we

really worked on this fall is being a little bit more aggressive in our play because that's really what it takes to have a little bit more swagger on the court. We're working on getting our confidence so high, but it might come across as cockiness. In an individual sport, that's pretty important since you're often out there by yourself playing. Your teammates are on other courts next to you, but you're still by yourself. With this separation, we're working on that confidence portion.

**Q:** Who have been the players who have stepped up to become leaders on both teams?

**A:** I think the seniors have really stepped up, but we don't have a captain model. We expect that type of leadership from everybody, but the seniors have stepped up. Ben Lortie and Jan Koupil are true seniors that have come a long way as far as leadership goes. Yannic Mader is a fifth-year senior that has really put in the work, on and off the court, to get himself back to a high level, proving his status. On the women's side, we have five seniors this year. A lot of credit goes out to Sophie Daavettila being our intensity leader. Eden Short, even in her four years, hasn't ever made the lineup, yet she continues to work hard. As a leader on the practice court, she's pushing everyone to reach that next level. She takes it as her responsibility to make her teammates that much better, even if she doesn't make the lineup.

**Q:** What are you looking for in

each team for the rest of the season?

**A:** I would say consistency. Last year, the women's team lacked a little bit of consistency from week to week. That's the women's number one focus. The men's is energy. We were really good last year and won a conference title. When it came down to the end, we may have gotten beat based on our opponents having more belief and energy.

**Q:** What is the goal for both teams this season?

**A:** The men's goal is to defend the conference championship, but not just the regular season, the GLIAC Championship tournament as well. Last year, we won the regular season but lost in the tournament to win state. This year, the goal is to bring home both trophies. This is the year that we're expecting a Sweet 16 run and the men are really focused on that. They want to achieve that next step. We continue to make the NCAA tournament, but they want to go farther. The women want to represent themselves with more competitive matches. Although the GLIAC title is there, they set some more individual goals as a team. One of them is to play less three centers, meaning last year, we were struggling to have complete matches. We're going to a lot of third sets because we are able to stay focused and close out matches. I think this year, the main goal for the women is to close out matches.



Head coach Mark Doren.

Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

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