



The Ferris State Torch

93 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

Week of Feb. 14 - Feb. 21

www.fsutorch.com

SGA presidential candidates Q&A

Student government sees presidential opposition for the first time in six years



Photo courtesy of Stephen Bender



Photo courtesy of Pedro Saltini

SGA candidate Stephen Bender.

SGA candidate Pedro Saltini.

Kourtney Fairchild
News Reporter

The Student Government Association announced that for the first time since 2018, there is more than one candidate for SGA president.

Stephen Bender, a junior in computer information systems.

What do you hope to bring to Ferris if you win the presidency?

If I win the presidency, I would like to bring an increase in the amount of outreach programs to the community that we currently have. That's my central focus, giving back. I have always enjoyed volunteering, that's actually why I joined student government in the first place. When I joined, I noticed that wasn't really what that was about. I would love to bring and create more opportunities. I've talked with the cabinet currently, and we have plans to do some community cleanup. We wanted to go to a personal care facility to do activities, clean up the highway, things like that. I feel like the student government's role should be trying to better our campus and our community.

Do you have plans for the current student government funds?

I would really like to give more to RSOs. I've had a lot of people come up to me as the director of internal assessment asking for funding for their RSOs. We have a lot of money but we're currently not doing a whole lot to spend it. With that amount of money, we have a lot of potential for generosity towards our RSOs. I would encourage them to send a representative. It's already encouraged but I think if they send a representative and propose funding and they see that money come in, it would be a further incentive to have someone from your RSO be a representative. I want to help other RSOs on campus, with that money, accomplish their goals, and then I also want to spend some of that money to buy equipment for our volunteering initiatives. I plan on putting that funding towards just trying to create a better campus and a better community with that primarily.

“We have a lot of money but we're currently not doing a whole lot to spend it.”

What inspired you to run?

I think what inspired me to run was seeing other leaders in the university making positive changes. There are a few faculty who put together the Ferris Leadership Scholars, which I'm part of. Seeing all the people that are involved in that, just some of the students and the faculty who put that on for the betterment of the university has been hugely, hugely inspiring. I'm in another RSO, the Bulldog Computer Professionals, and the president of that RSO has a deep passion for that program. The amount of time he spends and puts into it and the programs he comes up with are just amazing to me. That's something that, as a leader, I feel like I can help guide others on campus towards success for themselves, whatever that might look like. I'm just hugely inspired by other leaders on campus to run for the presidency.

Are there any challenges you think you might face taking over this position?

I think a challenge could possibly be getting people on the same page. Just from what I've seen, a lot of people like to have their own idea of how we should be running student government. I think a challenge that I would need to overcome if I was elected president would be to unite everybody to get everyone on the same page with our goals and hear what others have to say. Maybe some of my ideas aren't right and aren't taking the organization in the right direction so I want to increase communication within the organization. Last semester, we didn't really talk about goals or anything like that. So I want to unite everybody and let people know that we're friends. We should be friends.

Pedro Saltini, a sophomore in finance and economics.

What do you hope to bring to Ferris if you win the presidency?

I would like to bring the Ferris spirit back. Ferris is often picked as a cheap or affordable option for students and a few of them come to Ferris without the Bulldog spirit and pride. I want people to remind themselves of all the great things Ferris State University achieving and no matter where you are, you're always a Bulldog. I want to bring improvements as fast as the university is bringing them for us, so the students remind themselves that we are here together because we are Bulldogs and we always have more to achieve.

“Ferris always embraced me and welcomed me and I think I should give back to my community in a way.”

Do you have plans for the current student government funds?

The first thing we have planned is to have a big meeting with all students on campus and send out an email so we can decide a list of events that we need to accomplish as the student government board. Our success in our governance is going to be through completing the list of objectives the students decide are best for them and not having those being planned by the president. I think that's a position where you can get to governing with a lot of people and the students should be involved because the title of the position is a student government president and I want to be there for my community.

What inspired you to run?

I think what inspired me to run is that Ferris always embraced me and welcomed me and I think I should give back to my community in a way. I know I'm committed to not giving up on any challenge, staying focused and doing the best for Ferris State University.

Are there any challenges you think you might face taking over this position?

I think whatever we have as a challenge, we have a focused group. We have a really good group that is going to help me overachieve and deliver to Ferris State University the best president they have.

Bender and Saltini debated on Tuesday in place of the weekly SGA meeting. The coverage for that debate can be found on the Torch's website. In addition, voting for the next SGA president will be available until Feb. 16. The link can be found on Bulldog Connect. In addition, students should receive an email from SGA with a link as well.

News Editor Ember St. Amour contributed to the reporting of this story.

Got news? Let us know.

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News

Ember St. Amour | News Editor | stamoue@ferris.edu

Drug testing strips to be offered

Fentanyl test strips to be handed out by pharmacy student

Isabelle Marks
News Reporter

Ferris State is set to host a Narcan and Fentanyl Test Strip Distribution and Education Event on Feb. 15 and 16 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. across from Starbucks in the David L. Eisler Center.

The event, organized by the American Pharmacists Association and led by second-year pharmacy student Emily Smit, aims to educate Ferris students about the life-saving benefits of Narcan and the importance of Fentanyl test strips.

Smit says she will focus on the how, why and when at the tabling. How to use both Narcan and fentanyl test strips, why they are used and when to use them.

“Harm reduction is so important, and that is what this is, harm reduction. We’re going to keep you alive until you are ready for those next steps,” Smit says.

The distribution of Narcan and fentanyl test strips will be open to all attendees, with organizers noting that supplies may be limited.

“There is still a stigma we need to break with substance use disorders,” Smit says. “Whether you take an opioid, know someone who is struggling with substance use disorder, or are struggling yourself, there are so many rea-

sons [to have Narcan on hand.]”

Naloxone, commonly known as Narcan, will be a focal point of the event. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Narcan is a fast-acting medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, potentially saving lives.

Fentanyl, a prescription drug commonly used for pain control, will also be a key topic of discussion. Attendees will learn about the risks associated with its legal and illegal use, emphasizing the potential for overdose. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the symptoms of a fentanyl overdose are slowed or stopped breathing and the consequences of that can be fatal.

Fentanyl test strips will also be handed out at the tabling. These strips are a preventative measure used to help aid in stopping potential overdoses. These strips are important to be made accessible as opioid deaths climb every year. According to UC Davis Health, fentanyl is very deadly, as only two milligrams can cause an overdose, leading to death. It is also unable to be tasted or smelled, so it is extremely hard to know if drugs are laced without a test strip.

“A lot of people say we shouldn’t be giving someone who is struggling with addiction Narcan or fentanyl test strips, or some of the

needle exchange programs that are out there because it reinforces them to, you know, use drugs and sustain their addiction, but that’s not the case.” Smit said. “Giving someone Narcan or fentanyl test strips or having them in a needle exchange program is not encouraging substance use disorders. We are trying to educate people so that when they are ready and no longer want to use drugs, we are making sure that they are alive so that we can help them.”

This event allows students an opportunity to act and help save lives; you never know when you may have the chance to save someone else’s life with the knowledge gained at this event or the resources given out.

Smit has this message for those who are struggling with substance use disorder.

“If they’re struggling with it, they’re not alone,” Smit said. “The help will always be there when they’re ready for it, and whether or not they believe it, someone out there loves them, and if they don’t think anybody loves them, I will love them.”

The event underscores the university’s commitment to promoting a safer and more informed campus community in the face of the opioid epidemic. By providing education and free distribution of



Photo credit: Brianna Wichman | Freelance Photographer

Opioid rescue kits, like the one above, are placed around campus.

Narcan and fentanyl test strips, Ferris and the American Pharmacists Association aim to empower students to respond effectively to opioid emergencies.

“I really hope that this helps people,” Smit said. “And it’s such a passion for me because I have friends and family members who

have struggled with substance use disorders. So this is something that is very near and dear to my heart. I think no matter what anybody is struggling with, they deserve help, and I am hoping that this might be a way to show people who are struggling, you can find help.”

New democratic RSO on campus

Student run democratic RSO officially started

Kourtney Fairchild
News Reporter

Students for a Democratic Society officially became a registered student organization on Feb. 7.

They are a group focused on creating a student movement for ongoing injustices. SDS are nationally coordinated groups across different campuses throughout the United States. They describe themselves as an organization of student activists building a strong student movement defending their right to education to oppose racism, sexism and homophobia on campus.

One of SDS’s largest focuses is getting students connected with grassroots organizing in their cities and surrounding areas and getting connected nationally to build a student movement.

Welding engineering senior Forrest Hamilton is the president of the Ferris SDS chapter.

Hamilton said he saw what Grand Valley State University’s

SDS chapter was doing and was impressed and excited to build something like that at Ferris.

“SDS are focused on stopping the wars that the United States continue to propagate throughout the world and the horrible consequences of these wars and what we can do for this,” Hamilton said.

The group plans to start having weekly meetings soon. These meetings will be used to talk about current issues and develop materials for campaigns.

“A lot of our focus is going to be on Palestine and the genocide that is going on against the Palestinian people that is funded and continues to be worsened and worsened by the United States involvement,” Hamilton said.

Hamilton hopes SDS will help change some people’s minds out of the “black hole that is electoralism” and emphasize the importance of working with your community.

“We need to work with people that are right next to us and stop

thinking about these leaders as gods and almighty,” Hamilton said, “the American people are getting poorer and poorer and rent is going up and nothing is going to get better unless we start involving ourselves deeply in our communities.”

Jackson Roback is a member of Wayne State’s SDS chapter and helped bring the group to Ferris after hearing about “racist” protests about Gotion in the area from someone on campus.

“There’s a ton of issues that are underrepresented but the masses of people care about,” Roback said, “I’d say SDS stands for and wants students to realize is that there is a popular movement, and they should be the ones to join it.”

Both Hamilton and Roback highly encourage students to join SDS to be a part of the movement, regardless of their political baseline.

For more information about SDS and how to join, contact Forrest Hamilton at hamiltf3@ferris.edu.



Photo Courtesy of Forrest Hamilton

The logo for the Students for a Democratic Society.

Campus inclusivity

Staff and students share thoughts on all-gender bathrooms on campus



Photo Credit: Brianna Wichman | Freelance Photographer

Gender-inclusive bathrooms have been implemented in common spaces around campus, such as the bathrooms behind the IT service center in the DEC.

Nate Mathewson
News Reporter

Ferris students may have noticed new signage debuting around campus regarding more inclusive restrooms this week.

A Ferris Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee, the Campus Climate Team, has been working on implementing more consistency and inclusivity throughout bathrooms on campus.

Member of the all-gender restroom committee and facilities management project manager Karen Simmon credits the idea of addressing these restrooms to students.

"This was brought forward by students," Simmon said. "A lot of what we work on in [our] subcommittee comes directly from issues

brought up by students."

Simmon mentions wanting to implement more availability of feminine hygiene products as well as baby changing stations across the campus' restrooms in addition to creating more inclusive signage.

"Students would see consistency in what's available in the restrooms," Simmon said. "Students would notice the change in signage as well."

Simmon attributes the successes seen to the students and to the greater plan Ferris has.

"It's been very good. I've enjoyed being on the committee, learning a lot more about the day-to-day issues that students are facing and learning how Ferris is responding to them," Simmon said. "Our guidance comes from the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

plan. So you'll see that it has goals and it projects out until 2027 how we're going to meet those goals. And so I like to think that we work hand-in-hand and kind of focus on tasks that are also included in the plan."

The "Helping Others Rise" plan has specific, attainable goals. One of these goals is to "provide the infrastructure to support diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging," such as the updated restrooms.

"You don't enjoy hearing about some of the situations and some of the problems, but you start to feel a sense of accomplishment when you're able to look at things like this and implement a plan. That's rewarding," Simmon said.

Simmon also pointed to the Wellness Room on the second floor of the Birkam Health Center

Building as an example of another inclusive and thoughtful implementation of Ferris' plan.

Graphic media management sophomore Mackenzie Griffin said that she felt that the only events on campus included diversity and inclusivity.

Griffin noted that she approved of the inclusive restrooms, and would like to see more inclusivity.

"If I'm being honest, I feel like [Ferris] does a lot of things for show, to be politically correct, without actually putting in the effort to really make a difference," Griffin said.

Computer networking systems senior Thomas Tichelaar expressed that he thought the all-gender bathrooms were "a good first step" for Ferris' inclusivity.

"I feel like the variety of RSOs

around Ferris do a very good job representing diversity and inclusion," Tichelaar said. "I'm not sure that the school does as much as they should regarding actual implementation of diversity and inclusion. Like I said, I like the restroom change and I think that's a good example of the kind of thing I'd like to see more of moving forward."

The addition of more inclusive and thoughtful design in Ferris' campus facilities is an indication of the work these committees hope to accomplish in the coming years.

Mackenzie Griffin formerly worked as a culture reporter for the Torch in 2022.

ON THE RECORD

Ember St. Amour
News Editor

Prakken was cracklin'

Jan. 29, 9:07 a.m.: Firefighters responded to the Prakken Building after a light ballast started smoking before catching on fire for a few seconds. Facilities are still investigating the incident.

Getaway car

Feb. 1, 11:50 a.m.: Officers responded to lot 5E after a student came from FLITE and saw that their vehicle had been hit. There was minimal damage. Case was closed due to lack of leads.

Third theory is the charm

Feb. 6, 12:00 p.m.: Officers responded after receiving reports of domestic violence. On arrival, the incident was a civil dispute. The case was reported as a judicial referral due to a weapon being found in the room.

Brophy domestic dispute

Feb. 6, 7:45 p.m.: Officers responded to Brophy Hall after receiving a report that there was domestic violence between two students who were dating. Both students were suspended.

Lights, coffee, action!

An evening of songs and scenes



Photo credit: Kate Babel | Freelance Reporter

Emma Aho performs a song from past Ferris State theatre productions.

Kate Babel
Freelance Reporter

The Ferris State University Theatre Group got a chance to show off their voices and talent at The Backroom at Toppings for the 2024 Festival of the Arts.

The theater group presented “An Evening of Songs and Scenes” during the Big Rapids Festival of the Arts. The show took place on

Feb. 10.

The show featured songs from previous Ferris State musicals in the past, such as “Working: A Musical” and “Kinky Boots,” along with songs from other musical productions like “The Greatest Showman” and “The Little Mermaid” with stage direction from group director Dennis Henry and musical direction by Courtney Piercey.

Henry chose the Festival of the

Arts as a way of giving back to the community through song and talent.

“I thought it was an opportunity to reach out to the community to offer a free show to people who might not have heard of us who may or may not always go to something on campus, but would come to something that’s in the community,” Henry said. “I think it’s just letting the Big Rapids communi-

ty know we’re out there and that they might have a good time if they come and see us.”

The combined interest in the community and the calming small coffee shop vibes allowed the show to greet the audience with open arms and open minds. The show itself used previous material the students were familiar with and was not very long but in that short time, strong voices took the stage which was quickly followed by an eruption of cheers from the audience.

“We didn’t want to do anything new for this. We got using some songs from the musical we did last semester, as well as some songs that people just knew really well and we worked on them,” Henry said. “We only did two rehearsals because there are songs that they had rehearsed a ton before.”

With past material lined up for the show, students were able to feel comfortable and confident while performing, maybe even improving along the way. The middle of the show also featured a sneak peek of their upcoming play “Radium Girls” by D.W. Gregory. For some students, the theater group gives them a much-needed break from the everyday struggles of school and the work that comes with it.

Pre-optometry junior Emma Olinger stated how theater gives her a sense of calm at the end of the day, after her hard work.

“Honestly, being in theater is like a stress reliever. It’s kind of like, ‘Oh I get to go do what I love,’” Olinger said. “It’s very therapeutic for me, honestly. So I feel like it

just benefits my mental health and it’s interesting.”

For other students, theater offers something new for them to try and experience what theater has to offer. Providing a creative outlet for students to really engage and learn new skills in singing and acting.

Medical laboratory science junior Mary Hobar commented on much she liked being with the group.

“This is my first show with them,” Hobar said. “In the past, I’ve been more busy with school and work, but right now I’m just doing school so I thought it’d be really fun to do this show. I’ve seen this show before and I really like it.”

Even if students are not involved or have no experience, it offers a way for students to take a walk on the wild side and gain confidence, when it comes to standing and performing in front of people. This opportunity creates a boost in self-esteem and mental health.

“I think it’s great to use the other side of your brain when you’re doing a lot of math, science type stuff, doing the singing and acting really opens up the rest,” Henry said. “I think it allows people a creative outlet. I think it’s wonderful for mental health and it’s a lot of fun too.”

With the group giving their final performances, they received an encore and cheers from the crowd. The play “Radium Girls” starts on March 21 with performances being at 7:30 p.m. on March 21-23 and at 2:30 p.m. on March 24. Tickets are available now.

MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

Ember St. Amour
News Editor

Michigan: There are eight candidates for the U.S. Senate in Michigan with ethics complaints filed against them.

These complaints came after they failed to disclose their personal finances or enough information, which is a requirement by law, according to MLive. The complaints came from the Campaign Legal Center.

The eight candidates were Democratic party members Nasser Beydoun, Zack Burns, Hill Harper and Republican party members Michael Hoover, Peter Meijer, Sherrell O’Donnell, Sharon Savage and Alexandria Taylor.

Harper said he would file his information by the end of the month after the committee filed the complaint. A watchdog group argued that Harper should not be allowed an extension until the end of the

month, as Harper became a candidate in July and had 30 days to file his finances. If he were to have gotten an extension, he would have only had 90 days from his date of becoming a candidate according to the Detroit Free Press.

Senior Director of Ethics of the watchdog group Kedric Payne commented on the incident.

“Voters have a right to know the financial interests of the people hoping to represent them in electoral office,” Payne said. “Failure to timely file financial disclosure reports or omitting the required details altogether not only deprives voters of this critical information, but in some cases may conceal a campaign’s true sources of funding from law enforcement and the Senate Ethics Committee itself.”

The penalty for not submitting the personal finance papers in the 30-day period after candidates announce they are running is a \$5,000 fine.

GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

Ember St. Amour
News Editor

Las Vegas: The Kansas City Chiefs won their fourth Super Bowl on Sunday in their game against the San Francisco 49ers.

The Chiefs’ last Super Bowl was in 2020, where they also won against the 49ers.

The game on Sunday went into overtime as both teams were tied with 16 points in the final quarter causing the game to go into overtime. When the game ended the final score was 25-22.

The Chief’s tight end, Travis Kelce, commented on the team’s win.

“We couldn’t have gotten here without having that target on our back all year,” Kelce said. “Now we got a chance to do it three times in a row.”

The team has won the Super Bowl three times in the last five years, with them all being under coach Andy Reid, according to The Athletic.

This was also the first time in 19 years that there has been a repeat champion of three games.

Before this, the last team that had defended their title for winning another Super Bowl was the New England Patriots in the 2004 Super Bowl game.

Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

Ferris gives students a second chance

Big Rapids debuts its first Second Chance Prom

Kendall Phillips
Special Editions Editor

Ferris will be holding its first-ever Second Chance Prom on Friday, Feb. 16, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the David L. Eisler Center Ballrooms.

This event was put together by Diversity Advocacy for Identity and Sexuality Empowerment. Along with the collaboration of Education Counseling and Disabilities Services, Ready for Life and the LGBTQ+ Resource Center.

Social work junior Al Alley is the president and founder of DAISE. Alley is very excited to create a safe space for everyone at the Second Chance Prom.

"This is an opportunity for really anybody who didn't have a chance to have a safe, affirming or accepting place at high school dances," Alley said. "We are kind of catering it towards people with disabilities as well as LGBTQ folks, since those are two populations that most commonly didn't have a chance to have that space for them in high school."

Alley also explained how the Second Chance Prom tradition can span back almost forty years. It was a tradition that has almost always been a part of the LGBTQ community, but this time around they wanted to include the disabled community as well. Alley hopes that this dance will become a Ferris tradition for years to come.

"I think it's really important to make space for folks who did not

necessarily have space to celebrate themselves, their relationships and their partners or even just to have a place to express themselves in formal wear," Alley said. "Even if just a couple of people show up and have a good time in a way they weren't able to in high school, that would be enough for me."

Director of Accessibility and Disability Services Julie Alexander loved the idea of the second chance prom when Alley pitched it to her.

"You know a lot of people missed out on their prom for a number of reasons," Alexander said. "Sometimes those with disabilities, especially physical disabilities. Maybe felt like prom wasn't for them, like it was not designed with them in mind or they may have felt like nobody wanted to take them on a date. So, this is a chance for people who didn't feel included to go through the process and not miss out on all the fun."

Alexander hopes that this event is a way to make both those in the LGBTQ and disabled community feel a sense of belonging here at Ferris.

"I think it's very easy to not feel like you belong," Alexander said. "I know that some of the students that I work with who have disabilities haven't really found their people yet, and this would be a chance to feel more included and to have a more accepting community. It's not an academic event, it's not a support group type of thing, it's

a fun event where hopefully they can make some friends and have a good time."

Public relations senior Faith Oom is excited that she was given a second chance for a prom since she wasn't able to have one during her senior year of high school due to COVID-19.

She believes that this event will be a huge turning point for the LGBTQ community because it offers current students a safe space, as well as showing future Ferris students that they can have a space safe here also.

"It will show everyone that we are here and that we also deserve a chance to have fun," Oom said. "It will also show that anyone can have fun with the LGBTQ community and that we aren't terrible people, we are just here to dance and have a good time."

For anyone hesitant to attend the event, Oom wants them to know that this event will be a space full of love and laughter.

"If you are scared to go, somebody else is probably going to be just as scared as you are," Oom said. "I think that it will be valuable time and something that they'll be able to look back on for many years to come."

The event will span three hours of catering, drag performances, a DJ, a photo booth and dancing. For help finding formal wear for the event, stop by the LGBTQ+ Resource Center.



Flyer Courtesy of DAISE

Flyers for the upcoming event can be found around campus.

Meet Kavaris Sims

Ferris introduces new associate dean of student life

Brook Blausey
Culture Reporter

Texas-born and raised Kavaris Sims braves snowstorms and time changes as he begins his new role as associate dean of student life.

Sims fell in love with Ferris and the mission of the institution. He feels that Ferris' goals and prospects align perfectly with his own.

"The founder's focus on humanitarian efforts ensures that students have opportunities for college access," Sims said. "That's all in my bag, that's what I love to do. I'm a first-generation high school graduate and so I pride myself on serving as an administrator that tries to find innovative ways to support students throughout their journey in college."

Sims' main focus is to help students who may "slip through the cracks" to find their way back on the path of graduating.

"I like to look at college as a pipe, and the students are the flowing water that goes through the pipe," Sims said. "If there is a leak in the pipe that doesn't

stop the flow of water. The water continues to flow, some of it making it to the end of the pipe and some of it slipping through the leak. I like to think that my role is to figure out innovative ways to catch the leaks."

The two main reasons Sims gravitated toward Ferris' job listing were because of the administration and the support for students.

"In addition to so many resources provided for our students, there are a bunch of administrations who care about the well-being of students," Sims said. "[At Ferris,] it's a common thread that everybody wants to do right by the students, and that's rare."

The Department of Student Life supports student needs and aims to help students reach their goals despite what they may be going through. The assistant position was created this year to help the dean of student life Lina Blair.

CONT. ON PG. 6



Photo Courtesy of Kavaris Sims

The new associate dean of student life, Kavaris Sims.

MEET KAVARIS SIMS CONT.

“The institution is noticing that students are going through a lot and we want to support students through that, so Kavaris’ role is to help in that regard and to help oversee student conduct,” Blair said.

According to Blair, because of Sims’ years of experience in student life and student conduct, he was the prime candidate for this

position.

“Kavaris was our top candidate, and he was such a strong candidate,” Blair said. “He came out to campus for a day and did an in-person interview but also got to meet some of our team and students. Within a week, we were able to make a job offer to him. He is very relatable to the students and has confidence, but there is an ease about him as well.”

Director of Student Conduct

Becca Brumels has been excited to have a new staff member in the office. She would describe Sims as “fun and bubbly.”

“I love getting his exciting ideas and new perspectives,” Brumels said. “I would consider him a day one person. On his first day, he was ready to go. It’s nice to have a new supervisor who wants to continue to push you to be the best. He truly has a passion for serving students and I’m excited to see

“[At Ferris,] it’s a common thread that everybody wants to do right by the students, and that’s rare.”

what we can do in the future.”

Sims would describe his transition into the office as smooth. His coworkers have been enjoying his

presence and they are looking forward to the changes he will bring.

Upcoming Festival of the Arts Calender

15

- Novel Tea
- FSU Gallery Opening
- BRHS Choir Concert
- FSU Jazz Concert

16

- Game On!
- Easy as Pie
- Romance Corner

17

- Strings & Things
- Mountain Music Concert



Scan here to see the full event calander

Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

You're my type

<3



To:

From:



The Ferris State Torch

ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH + MY HEART

Feb. 14, 2024

BREAKING: Valentine wanted

Community in desperate need of romance on Feb. 14



To:

From:

Graphic by: Jessica Oakes | Editor-in-Chief

B.L.A.C.K.'s 29th annual Image Awards

Students awarded for their work in campus organizing and RSO leadership

Ni'Jah Rankin
Freelance Reporter

On Saturday, Feb. 10, the Black Leaders Aspiring for Critical Knowledge hosted their 29th annual Image Awards in the Williams Auditorium.

The Image Awards are an annual award show that highlights and celebrates minority student, faculty and staff achievements whether it's on campus involvement or academic excellence. This year, there were 20 awards given out to students and Ferris organizations.

The award show embodied Black culture with a performance by Ferris' Golden Majorettes along with introducing each award with music beloved by the Black community. Each award was named after many important Black figures, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Thurgood Marshall and Rosa Parks.

B.L.A.C.K. president Jahlyn Wynns notes why he feels it's important for minorities to come together and celebrate each other at the Image Awards.

"As a minority on campus, we need to stick together," Wynns said. "[We need to] award ourselves for things that we do on campus."

Member of B.L.A.C.K. and business administration junior Khi Hunt believes it's important to celebrate Black excellence at a predominantly white institute because of the lack of publicity that is shown.

"There was no excellence being shown by minorities out here at Ferris," Hunt said. "This whole event was put together to do that. To show excellence."

Winning an award made psychology sophomore Nadia Mausi

feel acknowledged for her hard work. She won the Mordecai Johnson Underclassmen Award for academic achievement.

"All my hard work over the years has been recognized," Mausi said. "It makes me feel proud."

Multiple organizations were also acknowledged for their involvement on campus including the Zeta Rho Deltas. The sorority won the Prince Hall Female Greek Award two years in a row.

Radiography senior Taliyah Garrett, a member of Zeta Rho Deltas, notes that it feels good for the organization to get praise for everything they do on campus. Garrett also won an individual award, the Mary Church Terrell Award.

"On behalf of me, it feels even better," Garrett said. "I don't really get any recognition so I like when people are able to see when I do right and wrong."

The last award of the night celebrated one of B.L.A.C.K.'s achievements, the 2024 B.L.A.C.K. Image Award. This award was given to business administration graduate student Rick Bradley. Wynns believed that Bradley deserved the award for his hard work and influence in B.L.A.C.K.

President Bill Pink admires B.L.A.C.K. and what they do. During his speech, he speaks about how it's great to celebrate these awards during Black History Month.

The night was sent off with B.L.A.C.K. giving roses to the You Beautiful Black Woman, their sister organization. The Image Awards is a way to remind students and organizations on campus that their efforts do not go unnoticed.



Senior Taliyah Garrett poses with The Mary Church Terrell Award.

Photo by: Ni'Jah Rankin | Freelance Reporter



Award winner Rayona Charles gives her acceptance speech.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer O'Connor



Ferris' FMLA chapter at the 29th annual Image Awards.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer O'Connor

Opinions

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EDITOR'S COLUMN:

Diet culture

Health and wellness, the unhealthy way

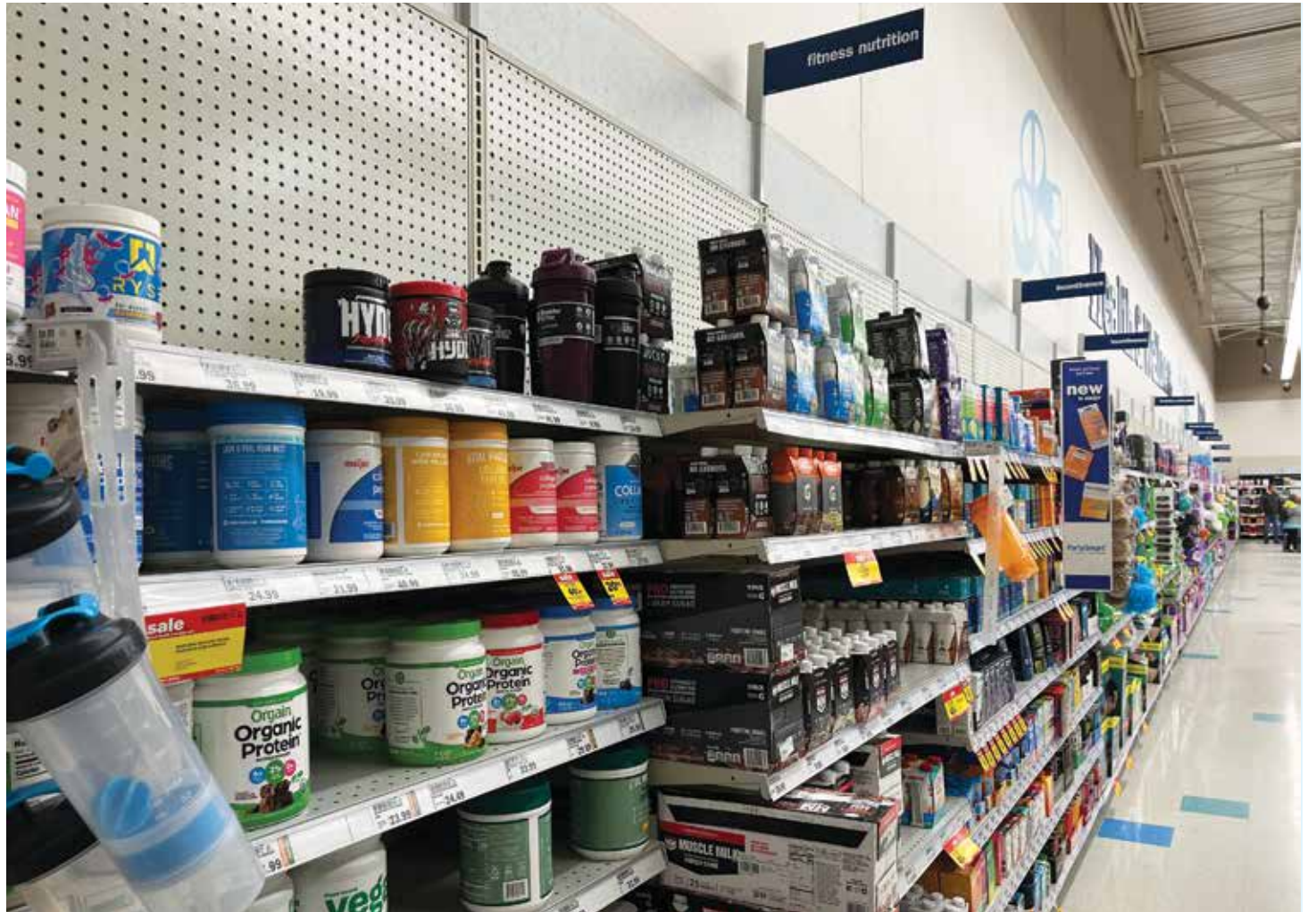


Photo Credit: Jessica Oakes | Editor-In-Chief

Health and wellness supplements can be found at everyday retailers, such as Meijer (pictured) or Walmart.

Jessica Oakes

Editor-In-Chief

One day in high school, I was picking up rice cakes and trail mix from Walmart. A silver-haired stranger on a ventilator looked at me with terror on his face.

"That's not going to put any meat on your bones," he said.

Regretfully, I gave an anxious laugh and walked away.

This small moment is a reflection of several toxic layers in our culture. First, some men feel entitled to speak authoritatively about how women look. Even if they don't know each other. Even if they have a 60 year age gap. Second, people assume they know what is healthy for others.

For most of my youth, eating in general was something embarrassing for me. I was picky. So many foods and the action of eating in front of others disgusted me. Whether I ate a full plate of different foods or barely anything at all, people seemed to have something to say about it.

A lot of people assumed I was healthy because of my appearance. I now understand that size is a mere reflection of genetics and calories in and calories out, regardless of what those calories are made of.

I am now a new member of health and fitness spaces. I love going to the gym on campus. My Instagram feed is full of dozens of fit content creators. My diet has certainly improved because of this. I eat more fruits and vegetables. I pay attention to things like added sugars and protein intake. I know, based on my activity in the next few hours, what kind of food will give me the energy I need to complete tasks.

Unfortunately, this type of health has introduced me to a whole new world of harm. Once someone sets new standards, they have ammunition for themselves whenever they fall short.

I recently got used to working out 6-7 days a week. Not only did this neglect my body's need to heal, but it also made me feel terrible when I could only exercise 4-5 days a week.

I had created a framework for myself that I felt I needed to meet perfectly. It restricted me from equally healthy things that a body needs, like rest.

So much of health is defined by restriction. Low calorie. Low-fat. Low sodium. Low carb. No sugar added. Unfortunately, restriction leads to bingeing. The National Institutes of Health states that deprivation can "activate the brain's

stress system, causing anxiety and withdrawal-like symptoms, and leading you to overeat the forbidden foods when you get a chance."

Many people on a dedicated health journey feel that foods and activities are divided into clear good and bad categories. This mentality is worse for you than so called "junk food."

When we feel cravings, our body is telling us something. If we eat sugar-free Jell-O every time our bodies want a Heath bar, we may never feel satisfied. Then we eat the Jell-O, then some peanut butter, then a protein bar, then an apple and then two Heath bars.

Molly Kimball, RD, is a nutritionist at Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans. She has spoken about the relationship between eating and guilt.

"Once you say it's OK to eat something, there is no guilt," Kimball stresses. "You don't inhale three without tasting them and then taste the fourth. You enjoy every one."

What the fitness community and obsessive dieters seem to forget sometimes is that food does not only serve one purpose. Whether or not a type of food is good for someone depends on what their goals are.

This fall, my appetite tripled.

People around me were shocked to see me finish a plate of food. I've certainly never eaten more calories in a week. This is what my body needs to make up for the amount of time I spend on a treadmill and lifting weights.

I used to feel the need to "earn" my food. I could eat a donut if I worked it off in the gym. Now I feel the opposite. My food intake unlocks the amount of physical activity I can do. It may be absurd for someone who is not physically active to drink energy drinks and eat calorie dense protein bars. For others, they are entirely necessary.

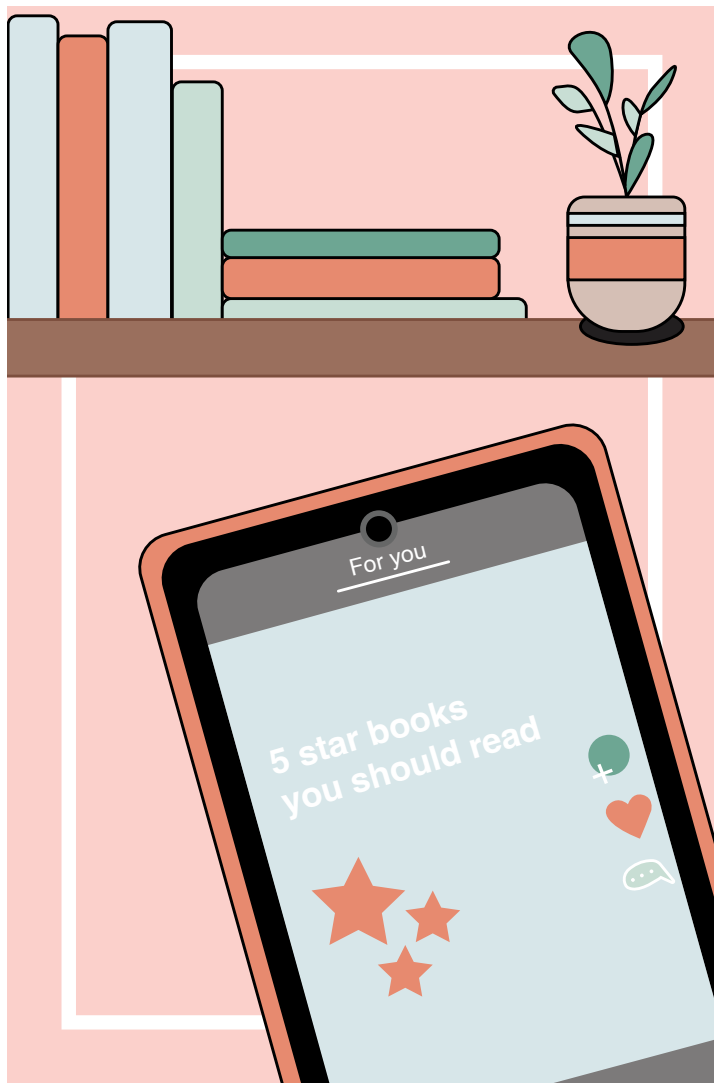
As I walk down aisles of green supplements, pre-workout powders, sugar-free snacks and protein shakes, I think a lot of it is overpriced snake oil.

I'm grateful for what the gym and mindful eating have done for me this year. I am undoubtedly physically stronger. Still, I realized that I don't always like myself more than I did before I tracked any of this.

All this is to say that health varies for every person in every phase of their life. At this point, I think the healthiest thing I can do is give my body what it tells me it needs, and remember the value in moderation.

Colleen Hoover

The dangers of promoting to young audiences



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Harmony Goodman
Production Manager

In my previous story for the Feb. 7 edition, I talked about “BookTok’s” latest obsession, “Fourth Wing.” However, author Rebecca Yarros is not the only one to gain popularity on TikTok recently. Colleen Hoover has been the talk of readers for a while, more now than ever with recent controversy.

As a reader myself, I am glad that more people are reading because of TikTok. I’ve loved reading since first grade and seeing some of my favorite authors and books gain more popularity has made me very emotional.

Even with this new rise of author fame, I am starting to wonder if we are promoting the wrong people. To me, this is the case with romance author, Colleen Hoover. She first gained popularity for her book “It Ends with Us”, nearly five years later after its release in 2016. According to Goodreads, a popular book rating app, “It Ends with Us” is rated 4.2 stars out of 5. With this rating in mind, I know that the book has been a reader favorite, but I argue that this book does not deserve such high ratings.

Everyone is entitled to read whatever they wish to, and I won’t argue with that. However, I think

it’s important to speak on the data we have about TikTok’s users. According to App Ape, a site that organizes and collects data on user demographics, we know that in 2024, 32.5% of users are between the ages of 10 and 19. With this data I find myself reflecting on my middle school and high school years. When I was in secondary school, like most I was easily influenced to follow popular trends. With the dominating age demographic on TikTok being the most easily influenced, I find it important to keep an eye on what we are promoting.

Hoover, as a person, has received a ton of backlash when it comes to drama within her family, but because society has developed the “separate the art from the artist” mentality when it comes to cancel culture, I don’t want to focus on that backlash. I have read “It Ends with Us” as well as her book titled “Ugly Love” to understand my stand on the subject. I have never been more disturbed by a book in my life. Sure, I’ve read horror, but this is something entirely different. Hoover writes romance books so imagine my surprise when I start reading “It Ends with Us” and I witness the perfect example of a toxic and abusive relationship displayed as the ideal romance. I see 16-year-

olds swooning over these characters and I am worried for their future, especially when it comes to relationships. Hoover writes in such a way that she romanticizes abuse and narcissism which can be bad for young readers.

The disturbing content within her books doesn’t stop there, some of the lines in her books have caused some concern all over “BookTok.” We see pictures of pages from her books that objectify children, saying things like “We both laugh at our son’s big balls.” The fact is this line simply didn’t need to be included. No person, let alone a parent, should be making inappropriate comments like these about children.

Book or not her stories completely desensitize readers from pedophile behavior on top of glorifying abuse to young readers. It is irresponsible that we are promoting this to young minds. There are so many other authors we can start recommending instead, such as Alexandra Bracken, Stephanie Garber, Marissa Meyer, and Scott Sigler. At the end of the day for every bad author, there are a hundred other good ones. We should start bringing attention to authors who truly deserve it and can make an impact on young minds.

“Percy Jackson and the Olympians”

A review of the new show

Jackie Moglia
Opinions Editor

While season one of “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” has wrapped up and season two has just been confirmed, I have quite a few things to say about this new on-screen adaptation. While I enjoyed the show, it didn’t quite meet my expectations.

The last episode was released on Jan. 30 and it left me wanting more. I think that Walker Scobell (Percy Jackson), Leah Jeffries (Annabeth Chase) and Aryan Simhadri (Grover Underwood) were perfect in their roles and completely encapsulated their characters. All of my issues were not in their acting, but in the writing.

The author, Rick Riordan, had spoken out multiple times about how this adaptation would be much more book-accurate than the movie. His promises seemed to fall a little flat.

The pacing of the show was a primary factor in this. It would be difficult to include every scene from a 377-page book, but with eight episodes I had hope. However, the episodes generally were forty minutes and mainly filled with dialogue. If there was one struggle the writers had with this show, it was the concept of “show, don’t tell.”

The show had nearly a 100 mil-

lion dollar budget. After finishing the series, I was scratching my head to find what they blew their budget on. It became a game, by the sixth episode, to guess what they spent the most on.

It was not comparable to what Disney was able to do with the same budget for “The Mandalorian,” or what the producers of “Game of Thrones” were able to do with a budget of \$60 million for the first season.

The show relied too heavily on dialogue to explain things, such as how Annabeth was the fiercest warrior at camp. Her strategic skills weren’t displayed. Instead, they talked about them while showing her watch other demigods train. Many other scenes like this could have relied more heavily on showing the viewers, rather than just telling.

I had some issues with character portrayals as well. Character development happened too quickly and felt too rushed. In the last episode when the prophecy is fulfilled, Luke, played by Charlie Bushnell, is revealed to be the one to betray Percy.

While the scene wasn’t quite the same as it was in the book, I was quite happy with the way they portrayed it and was excited to see some more cinematic shots that the show generally lacked. The happiness was short-lived, as



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

it is revealed that Annabeth was watching the entirety of the fight.

This takes away from a key part of Annabeth’s character. In the book, when she finds out that Luke is the traitor, she can’t and doesn’t want to believe it. Throughout the series, she continuously has hope that he will change.

It’s a point I don’t understand the change for, much like I didn’t understand the change of the Lotus Casino scene, where they are sent to meet Hermes (Lin-Manuel Miranda, which was a bit of a jumpscare). I didn’t mind the change but once it was revealed that they already missed the deadline for the quest, my confusion

grew.

Subtle changes in the show, such as Athena punishing Annabeth for her alleged “impertinence” or Percy being given four pearls rather than three, made it difficult to follow along the first time through for many book readers. Even if the changes weren’t necessarily important to the plot, they were important for character development we never got to see.

Now that I’ve aired my grievances, I would like to take a moment to talk about what I did love. Casting. I think that all of the actors did amazing with their roles. Charlie Bushnell did a fantastic job at portraying Luke.

In the books, once he betrayed Percy and camp, I didn’t care much for him. After watching the portrayal and how the gods acted in the show, it is difficult to not see where he was coming from.

A minor detail I loved was the naming of episodes after the chapters of the book, such as “I Accidentally Vaporize My Pre-Algebra Teacher” or “I Become Supreme Lord of The Bathroom.”

I would still rate the show at least an 8/10, but I have hopes that the newly announced second season will exceed expectations.

Sports

Dylan Rider | Sports Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

Football rings in the new season

Ferris introduces extensive class of new recruits

National Signing Day



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Connor Grypma
Sports Reporter

Coming off its ninth straight DII playoff appearance, Ferris State Football added a signing class of 37 recruits to its roster on National Signing Day on Wednesday, Feb. 7.

The press conference took place in the Ewigleben Sports Complex, where head coach Tony Annese introduced the new signees to the media. The list included 15 recruits for the offense, 21 for the defense and one specialist. This is the largest Ferris signing class since 2020 when the program brought in 38 recruits.

"We hit the ground running this year," Annese said. "We were out recruiting early so we spent a lot of time in the office over Christmas break. Got a lot of early commits, and a lot of D1 misses too."

A majority of Ferris's signings have been on the defensive side of the ball the past three years and the Bulldogs continued that streak with ten defensive backs, five linebackers, five defensive ends and one defensive lineman.

The offensive side was bolstered by five offensive linemen, four wide receivers, three running backs, two slot receivers and one quarterback.

Alongside the new class, the Bulldogs signed three new three-star recruits, according to 247 Sports. The three-star signees include running back Kevin Simes, defensive back D'Mari Jenkins, and wide receiver Glen Smith. This is the highest number of three-star recruits that have ever been signed in school history.

The Bulldogs kept their recruiting process between three states, signing players from Michigan (25), Florida (11) and Ohio (1). This marks the 13th straight year Ferris brings in recruits from the

Sunshine State.

Annese credited the recognition of their program in Florida as why they bring in so many recruits from there.

"It's the same philosophy we've always had," Annese said. "Those Florida kids mesh well with our guys. We have a good culture down in Florida and more people are starting to know us well. This'll bring us up to 34 Florida players on the roster I believe."

The Bulldogs' connection with Florida is strong, as 23 players on last season's roster hailed from the state.

With the added recruits to the roster, 247Sports has Ferris as the #143 ranked class in all of college football. This is the highest-ranked DII school on the list.

Annese continued to preach the importance of a winning mentality from the new class and made it very apparent throughout the press conference. Eleven of the 25 Michigan signings led their respective teams to the state championship in their high school careers.

"The stability of the program is that we can't fall off," Annese said. "[Championship] is the expectation. We can't slow down and take a class of 20 or 25 and I think we got a great class with some great athletes as well."

The Bulldogs will begin their preseason training this spring in hopes of continuing their playoff streak and bringing another national championship to Ferris. The next event for Bulldog Football is their spring game, which has yet to be announced.

A full list of the 2024 recruits and more signing day information can be found online at ferris-statebulldogs.com.



Photo courtesy of Paige Williams and Sandy Gholston

Head coach Tony Annese introduced the new signees for the 2024 football season last Wednesday.

Basketball splits at Lake Superior State



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Junior Reece Hazelton goes in for a jump shot during the January 6th game against Lake Superior State, held at Wink arena.

Women continue win streak while men fall to the Lakers

Jeffery Walker
Sports Reporter

Both Ferris State basketball teams hit the road this past week in a matchup against Lake Superior State, the men's basketball team fell to the Lakers while the women claimed their 10th straight victory in a dominant win.

Men's Basketball

The men's team (17-6, 7-5 in conference) struggled in their matchup against the Lakers as they fell to defeat 87-74. The Bulldogs' rough first half on defense hurt them in this game as they were not able to fight back being down 52-39 at the half.

The Lakers shot 65.5% from field goal range and 58.3% from three-point range, leading to them having the double-digit lead over the Bulldogs at the half. In the second half, the Bulldogs' defense was able to slow the Lakers down

as they shot 45.8% from the field and 27.3% from three-point range. Offensively, the Bulldogs only shot 43.1% from the field and struggled from three-point range shooting 20%.

Assistant coach Josh Fleming thought the Bulldogs were not able to match the Lakers in Saturday's loss.

"That day, they were the better team," Fleming said. "It just seemed like we were a step behind at every move. And I mean, we lost some of their shooters, they made us pay for it. We couldn't do the same thing that I'm on the other end."

The Bulldogs were led by senior Ben Davidson with 20 points, junior forward Deng Reng with 11 points and senior guard Amari Lee with 10 points.

Senior forward Desean Munson believes that defense is what the team can continue improving on to help them throughout the rest of

the season.

"Defense wins championships," Munson said. "That's all and that's the biggest. We can have as much offensive talent but if we allow the opposing team's offensive talent to perform better, it's always going to be tough competition."

Women's Basketball

On the other hand, the nationally ranked No. 7 Bulldogs women's basketball team (17-2, 11-1 in conference) finished their game with a victory over the Lakers with a final score of 94-55.

The Bulldogs have not lost a game in over a month, with their last loss coming on Jan. 3. The blowout is Ferris' fifth game this season where they've beaten their opponents by 30+ points.

Head coach Kurt Westendorp explained what a win streak means to him.

"Win streaks are great because it means we're playing consistent

basketball and finding ways to win against some really good teams," Westendorp said. "Hopefully we can keep it rolling with more consistent play."

The Bulldogs played well on both sides of the ball in this matchup. Offensively, the Bulldogs shot 52.9% from the field and 40.9% from three-point range, and defensively they held their opponents to just 32.7% from the field and 36.4% from three-point range. The team outrebounded their opponents 44 to 26 and won the assist battle 22 to 12. They also forced 16 turnovers that turned into 24 points.

The team had 13 players score in the game and totaled 45 bench points. Three players led the Bulldogs with double-digits with senior forward Chloe Idoni collecting 19 points, sophomore forward Mya Hiram with 17 points and junior guard Kadyn Blanchard bagging 15 points.

Hiram believes that continuing the Bulldog winning streak is healthy for the team.

"Being able to keep our streak going and playing at such a high level and pace builds a lot of confidence going into the last of the regular season games," Hiram said. "We have a couple of more games at [Jim Wink Arena] so that always helps having our fans there. I think we're all excited for that."

Both teams will be returning home for the weekend series as they take on Saginaw Valley State and Wayne State. The women's games will be on Feb. 15 against the Cardinals with game time set for 5:30 p.m. and on Feb. 17 against the Warriors with game time set for 1 p.m. The men's team will be taking the court after the women's games with game time set for 7:30 p.m. against the Cardinals and 3 p.m. against the Warriors.

WANTED

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Ferris State Torch

DUE: Wednesday, March 6, 2024

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- Copies of articles or other written work
- At least two references (recommendation letters not required)

Tennis springs into action

Both men's and women's programs begin their spring season



Photo credits: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Sophomore Esunge Ndumbe serves while his partner, Alexander Mader prepares for the return.

Connor Grypma
Sports Reporter

Ferris tennis teams began their spring season with exhibition matches in late January and began regional play this past week.

The men's tennis team has jumped out to an 18th place ranking in DII, whereas the women's team continues to seek their first overall win of the season.

Men's Tennis

Following a loss in both an exhibition match and regional play, men's tennis bounced back this past weekend with a 5-2 win over the Findlay Oilers on Friday, Feb. 9.

Ferris secured the doubles point behind victories from their two doubles tandem of senior Jan Koupil and junior Alessandro Santangelo, and their third doubles team of sophomore Eric Kovacs and senior Yannic Mader.

The Bulldogs dominated the

singles side with wins on four of their six matchups. Senior Benjamin Lortie earned a gritty three-set win at one singles and sophomore Esunge Ndumbe continued his winning streak with a straight-set victory at three singles. Santangelo and Mader captured wins at five and six singles to secure the victory for the Bulldogs.

Head coach Mark Doren praised his team for the win against a tough regional opponent.

"Very impressive win for Lortie who's been dealing with a lingering injury and the pairing of Mader and Kovacs," Doren said. "They pulled out the wins with tennis that had the whole building going wild. This is one of the strongest Findlay teams we've played during my time here at Ferris, so I'm very happy with our weekend."

The men started off their spring season with a 6-1 exhibition loss against the DI Western Michigan Broncos on Wednesday, Jan. 17.

The Bulldogs gained the doubles point with wins from their first doubles team of Ndumbe and Lortie, and their third doubles team of Kovacs and Mader. Regional play began last week on Sunday, Feb. 4 with a 6-1 loss to Indianapolis. Ferris was swept in doubles play, but Ndumbe secured the lone point for the Bulldogs with a three-set victory at three singles.

Women's Tennis

For the women, they did not rebound following two exhibition matches against DI foes and fell to the Findlay Oilers.

The team was downed by Findlay with a 5-2 loss on the road. The duo of sophomore Ana Hernandez Ferrer and sophomore Maria Fernanda Hernandez Ferrer got the Bulldogs two points at two and four singles. Ana Hernandez Ferrer won a convincing two-set match and sophomore Maria Fernanda Hernandez Ferrer came back af-

ter dropping the first set to win her match in three sets.

The Bulldogs finished off their weekend stint with a 4-0 loss to Indiana (Pa.) on Saturday, Feb. 11 at the neutral location of Sandusky, Ohio.

Despite the doubles point going to IUP, the one doubles team of Ana Ferrer and senior Morgan Waller won an impressive matchup 7-5 against the eighth-ranked doubles team in DII.

Doren spoke highly of the women's team despite the tough start to the spring season.

"We may not have come out of this weekend with wins, but I think we grew more this weekend than we have in a long time," Doren said. "We're giving other's the opportunity to play higher positions and get much needed experience that will help us continue to get better leading in to GLIAC play at the end of March."

The Bulldogs fell to the Broncos

7-0 with a sweep of the singles flights and two out of three doubles flights. Ferris then lost two bouts to the Eastern Michigan Eagles on Sunday, Jan. 28, 6-1 and 4-0. Maria Ferrer gained the lone win of the series at five singles with a resilient tiebreaker decision. Alongside the men's team, the women's team began regional play against Indianapolis but suffered a 7-0 loss. The doubles duo of Ana Ferrer and Waller won their matchup 7-5 in the loss.

Both the men's and women's teams will continue regional play after a week off on Sunday, Feb. 18 when they take on the rival Northwood Timberwolves at home in the FSU Racquet and Fitness Center. The women's match is set to begin at 10 a.m. and the men will begin at 2 p.m.

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