



3OH!3 leaves Ferris “Starstruck”

Electronic pop duo headline spring concert

Jessica Oakes
Editor in Chief

Nearly 700 people filled William’s Auditorium last week to hear hits like “Don’t Trust Me” live in concert.

3OH!3, a musical duo named for their Colorado area code, was selected by Ferris students to headline the 2024 spring concert. Two hours before doors opened, students began lining up to see the group for themselves.

One of which was accounting and finance senior Faith Failoe. For her, 3OH!3’s music is a source of nostalgia.

“I grew up on their music,” Failoe said. “I was a child when I listened to them, now they’re in the same town as me.”

The concert is an annual project coordinated by the student organization Entertainment Unlimited. Music and entertainment business senior Kaitlyn Walters is wrapping up her senior year as E.U.’s president.

Walters revealed that there was a tie between 3OH!3 and another performer on the list of potential acts Ferris students voted to see. Collec-

tively, E.U. felt that 3OH!3 was the right choice for the show.

E.U. members and student performers were both pleased with their kind interactions with the members of 3OH!3, Sean Foreman and Nathaniel Mott.

“They were very kind, very respectful, very nice,” Walters said. “They kind of kept to themselves, really... They’re true professionals, and they know what they’re doing.”

Foreman and Mott’s amicable reputation preceded them. E.U. advisor Ben Avery was jokingly “warned” by Degy, their booking agency, just how nice the duo is.

“They were great interacting with our openers,” Avery said. “They gave them advice before they went on and took in some sites while they were here in Big Rapids.”

These sites included Schuberg’s Bar and Grill. Foreman and Mott were amused by the fact that the bar is next to an insurance agency of the same name.

Before 3OH!3 took the stage, openers Ruby Opalite and the Lazy Suzan warmed up the crowd.

The Lazy Suzan has steady-

ly increased their recognition as a local rock band over the past year. They are comprised of Ferris students and a former student of Big Rapids’ Galloup Guitars Lutherie School.

Lead singer and guitarist Jackson Lee was excited to expose his band to new listeners in the area. He was pleased to see students come out and enjoy their music.

“The student life, I feel, is hungry for stuff to do. There’s not really a lot in Big Rapids,” Lee said.

Music and entertainment business senior Ruby Opalite found it “surreal” to see students singing her lyrics back to her in Williams Auditorium.

“This was just the beginning. The Ruby Empire is only going to expand from here,” Opalite said.

E.U. is planning the annual Spring Fling, which the Lazy Susan performed in 2023. This year’s will feature live music from Grand Rapids-based indie band Pretoria. For more campus music news, find E.U.’s Instagram @ ferriseu.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer
Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

From Mexico to Michigan

The Ferrer sisters’ path to Ferris State women’s tennis

Connor Grypma
Sports Reporter

In their brief two-year stint for the Bulldog’s women’s tennis team, the sister tandem of Ana Sofia Hernandez Ferrer and Maria Hernandez Ferrer have quickly found their path to success.

Both sisters have earned GLIAC Player of the Week awards and contributed over 55 match wins to the team between the two.

Yet, the sister’s journey to Ferris differs from your typical scholarship athlete. Traveling to a different country unfamiliar with the customs and aspects of the world is a unique challenge. The Ferrer sisters did it all on their own.

Ana and Maria both hail from Mazatlan, MX, over 2,000 miles away from Big Rapids, where their childhood was comprised of playing tennis tournaments across the country.

The two were inspired to play tennis by their grandparents, uncle and mother playing before them.

The sisters have been playing tennis since the young age of seven and never looked back after their parents told them they had to get a scholarship to a university because they wouldn’t be able to pay for both of their studies.

“My parents don’t speak much English, so it was up to my sister and I to contact

coaches without any advice, not to mention trying to get a student visa,” Maria said. “We both recorded videos of us playing tennis and sent it to coaches all over the United States. We had in mind that there was a possibility we would have to separate and go to different universities.”

The Ferrers’ talents were noticed by head coach Mark Doren, who wanted both sisters to play for Ferris. Ana said this offer “caught their attention,” allowing them to travel and play together again. With the distance between them, Doren took them on a virtual tour of Ferris over a video call to introduce them to the school and tennis facilities.

Doren recalled the recruitment of the sisters and the quick impact they had on the women’s team dynamic.

“Ana and Maria were the first players I ever recruited from Mexico,” Doren said. “Right away they were awesome to talk to and they helped me learn more about tennis in Mexico. They quickly made an impact as freshman and have since won many important matches. But it’s not just their success on the court, it’s the impact they’ve made on our team culture. Both are very kind and considerate, but it’s their sense of humor that has helped our fun team dynamic.”

Doren also set the sisters up with contacts with active

players at the time to grow their chemistry with the team, including junior Parker Nolan.

Nolan spoke to the Ferrers during their recruitment in their freshman year.

“In just my first call with them, I thought ‘Wow, these girls really love tennis,’” Nolan said. “They were so kind and genuinely excited at the prospect of continuing their tennis career.”

The sisters decided to join the Ferris team and make the day-long journey permanent to continue their tennis careers.

Maria reminisced on the conversations with her parents about moving away from home.

“My parents encouraged

us to study abroad,” Maria said. “As a joke, we said we were going to find a school as far away as possible and we ended up in Big Rapids.”

The sisters joined the women’s squad in the fall of 2022 for their freshman year and were inserted in the lineup for just the second match of the season as a doubles team.

Despite the similar rules, the tennis play in Mexico differs from Michigan’s playstyle. Ana found it difficult to adjust to the differences between countries at first.

CONT. ON PG. 10



News

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Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Lead singer and guitarist Jackson Lee of the Lazy Suzan opening for 30H!3.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Ruby Opalite opening for 30H!3.

Ferris Dems revived

RSO returns, first time since COVID-19 pandemic

Isabelle Marks
News Reporter

The Ferris Dems registered student organization, a branch of the Michigan College Democrats, is working on rebuilding their club by recruiting an e-board and getting new members to join.

Sports communication sophomore and president Jonathen Hart expressed his excitement about getting started as an organization that hopes to help amplify the voices of local students.

"It would be supportive if you attended our informational meeting, even if you don't agree with everything," Hart said. "Our organization aims to provide a platform for people to voice their beliefs. You might find common ground on some issues, or even if you don't, that's alright. We're on a small campus where supporting each other is crucial. So it would be great if everyone interested in politics could show a bit of support and help each other out."

Mechanical engineering technology junior and vice president AJ Baker shared the excitement.

"This RSO is a great way to network with politicians and influential leaders throughout Michigan, to make change, and to become more involved in the political process," Baker said.

Hart also shared that there are two Republican RSOs on campus, the Ferris Republicans and Turning Point USA.

"I wanted to join an organization once I got to college, where I would be able to voice my opinions and kind of be around like-minded students who have the same beliefs as me," said Hart. "When this opportunity arose, and I saw that there was a new RSO that was coming together, I wanted to be a part of it in any way."

The RSO has upcoming plans for the school year, such as an informal meeting and recruiting new members.

"We'll want to meet and get to know each other af-

terward, we're going to start building an actual student body of general members who are interested," Baker said. "We will start polling to see what interests are the most important to students and then see what we can do to communicate with local leaders, state leaders, and see how we can help make a change that represents student opinions."

"We're going to have kind of an informal informational meeting just for people to get to know us, more on a personal level," Hart said. "Talk to us to see who we are, and what we believe in. Over the summer, we'll start making plans for how to jump right into things when school starts back up."

You can contact the Ferris Dems on their Instagram @ferrisdems, or email Hart at hartj19@ferris.edu for more information.

Jonathen Hart is a former Torch employee.



Graphic Courtesy of the Michigan College Democrats

Shaking things up

The Milkshake Spot opens for spring season



Photo by: Kate Babel | Freelance Reporter

The Call Me Andee shake at The Milkshake Spot.

Kate Babel
Freelance Reporter

As the spring and summer season approaches, The Milkshake Spot has reopened its windows on April 5.

This little building located

at 250 State St. in downtown Big Rapids is owned by Kate Lenau and Karen McNally and opened in May 2023. Bringing a unique community experience with its sweet treats and one-of-a-kind milkshakes, The Milkshake Spot

kicked off its opening day by serving up frozen delights and unique milkshakes to around 45 people during its busiest hours between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Many of which included local community members and Ferris State

students.

Leanu shared her experience and history with The Milkshake Spot.

"It was a Dairy Queen when I was a kid, and it was the place to go," Lenau said. "I think over the past few years, there's been a struggle with this building and having an ice cream shop here in town. I came from a restaurant management background before I got into real estate, so I've been in the realm of not only cooking but customer service. So, when the building set here for sale, all I could think is I know I could take this little diamond in the rough and polish it up, and that's what we did."

McNally wasn't available for comment, but General Manager Jodi Nelson provided more feedback about The Milkshake Spot and what it has to offer.

"We opened with this idea in the middle of May last year," Nelson said. "So I've been here since the beginning since it opened, and it was crazy last year, we learned a lot. We had a great time, and this year has been slower-paced. I learned a lot about ice cream machines, how to break them down, how to take them apart, sanitize them [and] put them back together. I learned how

to do orders through different companies that we use for products and a lot of new techniques."

With learning experiences as a new business, The Milkshake Spot has gained a reputation among the members of the Big Rapids community as Lenau and McNally put a creative spin on the milkshakes they make. There are various toppings and flavors, using names like "Call Me Ande" for their Andes Mint shake and "The Bulldog," which has a blend of Oreo cookies and vanilla ice cream with Ferris State's signature crimson and gold colors.

Healthcare administration junior and The Milkshake Spot employee Raelin Clancy explained her work experience.

"I think it's super fun. I love seeing all the familiar faces and the fast-paced environment," Clancy said.

As a Ferris State student, Clancy watched her friends go to the window as she served orders.

Big Rapids community member Alison Jenerou shares her thoughts on her experience.

"We come a couple of times a summer, we love all the options we love their fancy milkshakes with all the fancy toppings," Jenerou said. "I have a young family

so I love family-friendly places where we can enjoy some outdoor spaces together and have a nice treat,"

The Milkshake Spot offers an environment for people of all kinds to savor a frosty treat as they enjoy being close to nature, as the location is near Mitchell Creek Park. Families from all over Big Rapids come to enjoy some tasty treats with each other and their friends, as they make memories for years to come.

"I would say our atmosphere [is] definitely family-oriented. We want people to come and hang out in the yard, listen to the music, play outdoor games, but also our iconic shakes are something no one else offers," Lenau said.

Due to its seasonal opening in the summer, not many Ferris students can enjoy their shakes. This does not stop them from coming over to hang out with their friends as they enjoy a sweet treat before the end of the semester.

"We have just a huge following in our community, so that keeps us happy and pretty well, but we'd love to see more Ferris Students come down here," Nelson said.

The Milkshake Spot is open from Tuesday through Sunday from noon to 10 p.m.

SGA budget updates

Kourtney Fairchild
News Reporter

The Student Government Association's current budget is \$86,354.22.

Since the beginning of the semester, SGA has given small amounts of money to their presidential candidates for advertising and to registered student organizations. They started this semester with a budget of over \$95,000.

Cyber security senior and Grand Treasurer Christopher Fidell received a weekly breakdown of the SGA budget.

"This week we have awards and scholarships, a conference fee, consumable items, printing and general supplies," Fidell said. "There aren't detailed lists of what was bought specifically, just the overall costs."

There was \$7,000 taken out for awards and scholarships for the president and vice president next semester. A bill passed last semester,

which allocates \$4,000 for the president and \$3,000 for the vice president.

SGA canceled the Big Event this year and discussed potential events to host for the rest of the semester. No plans have been set, meaning SGA has no plan for this budget until the fall semester.

As part of tuition, students pay a university services fee of \$45, which goes to SGA and the Student Activity Fund Allocation Committee. Students may request a refund for this fee within the first five days of the semester, but they may not be able to attend certain events if they do.

"The fee is for student government to help fund events and to help run the show and for SAFAC to put on events and travel to events," Fidell said.

SGA meets every Tuesday in the Founder's Room in the David L. Eisler Center at 6:30 p.m. and is open to anyone who wants to come.

Student Government Association budget breakdown:

SGA receives part of the \$45 university fee from each student every year

- \$7,000 for awards and scholarships
- \$4,000 for the president
- \$3,000 for the vice president
- \$85,325.25 left in the budget



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Scholarship updates

Phase two's launch release date announce

Sort: Alpha: A-Z







	Abigail Smith Timme Endowed Scholarship AMOUNT: Amount Varies	ORGANIZATION: Scholarships and Financial Aid
	AFSCME Local 1609 Annual Scholarship AMOUNT: Amount Varies	ORGANIZATION: Scholarships and Financial Aid
	Allen Puterbaugh Scholarship AMOUNT: Amount Varies	ORGANIZATION: College of Arts, Sciences, & Education
	Allesee Metals/Jewelry Endowed Scholarship AMOUNT: Amount Varies	ORGANIZATION: Kendall College of Art and Design
	Alphonso A. and Mary C. Aguirre Endowed Scholarship AMOUNT: Amount Varies	ORGANIZATION: College of Arts, Sciences, & Education
	Alro Steel Endowed Scholarship	

Photo from Scholarship Universe

Kourtney Fairchild
News Reporter

Phase two of Scholarship Universe will open on April 15.

This phase will include all donor-based Ferris Scholarships. These scholarships are not included in the first phase because some require Free Application for Federal Student Aid information.

Phase one included over 10,000 external scholarships, whereas phase two scholarships were created for Ferris.

Students are automatically entered for scholarships if they meet the requirements. This is based on things like cumulative GPA, program, or college.

The only scholarships from phase two that will show up in Scholarship Universe are those that have other requirements. This includes questions about leadership experience or participation

in registered student organizations, essays and letters of recommendation.

Applications for all phase two scholarships are due on May 3 at midnight.

Pre-dentistry junior Adriana Drier was disappointed with phase one but is excited for the release of phase two.

"I put in all of my information and still had to go to each scholarship individually to look at the requirements and sometimes I didn't even meet the requirements," Drier said, "I'm glad phase two is supposed to be better and applies your information automatically like the old platform."

Drier understood the reason for the delay in the release of phase two but found the timeframe for applications stressful.

"Two weeks seems a little ridiculous," Drier said, "That's so little time and it's at the end of the semester when we have [to] worry about getting

ready for finals."

Sophomore Arismia Lautenbach struggled to find scholarships.

"There aren't many scholarships for people that are undecided on a major because a lot of them are major-focused," Lautenbach said.

Lautenbach appreciates that the new phase will automatically enter students into scholarships they qualify for.

A comprehensive list of all Ferris Scholarships is available for students through Scholarship Universe. This list includes all scholarships that will be available and their requirements. This can be found through the "public listing" tab.

Students who are awarded Ferris Scholarships are expected to be notified in early May through early July.

Academic Senate initiates changes

SGA, university impacts and policies discussed

Tate Zellman
News Reporter

The Academic Senate meeting allowed several campus communities to announce their plans for the rest of the year and for the start of the fall semester.

The meeting was held on April 2 with 35 university representatives in attendance. The purpose of the new changes presented to the Senate was for their approval to be received.

Student Government Association President and computer information systems junior Stephen Bender announced changes he plans to make to SGA at the Academic Senate meeting.

"The SGA approved four \$500 scholarships being offered to members who have made an impact on campus in the past year through volunteering and submitted an evaluation form through SGA," Bender said. "Also, the SGA is going to be restructured next year to include internal committees that serve as 'vessels of change' for students to utilize on campus and how we are finalizing an SGA beginner guide for new members."

According to Bender, the changes involving internal committees are exciting because it is something the

SGA hasn't seen in a while and is a new concept. He also stated that members getting scholarships would encourage others to join the association and help them realize they can make a large impact.

Other changes were mentioned at the meeting due to the potential for big impacts on faculty and students, which social work professor Michael Berghoef found important.

"I'm most excited about our ongoing discussions about AI, both creative and problematic aspects of it," Berghoef said. "I'm also excited about our own grant, awarded to the Shoah Project committee, where we will be visiting Zekelman Holocaust Center in Farmington Hills and the Arab American in Dearborn. I'm very excited that we can offer this all-day educational excursion at no expense to students."

The committee will be taking the trip on Friday, April 12, and Berghoef hoped many chose to sign up to learn more about the educational excursion.

The Academic Senate President and an Associate Professor of Public Health Emmanuel Jadhav found the Academic Senate to be a place for changes to be made toward the university.



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Multimedia Editor

Members of the Academic Senate listening to a speaker.

"The Academic Senate is such a great platform for initiating changes at the levels of policies, program levels, student life and faculty development," Jadhav said. "I am really interested in how we bring about institutional changes that make up our programming robust."

Despite some changes involving excitement, Jadhav mentioned that changes don't always come with a simple agreement. There can be disagreements and challenges along the way for a change to be considered, according to Jadhav.

"I've got to experience many things, and one of them is coming across the fact that policy is not easy," Jadhav said. "You're going to displease somebody along the way, and the goal is to not make them mad. If we can maintain that collegiality, then I've done my job. I want everybody to come back and have healthy discussions and not get upset with each other."

The Academic Senate will have its final meeting of the academic year on Wednesday, May 1.



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Culture

Giuliana Denicolo | Culture Editor | denicog@ferris.edu

Running miles for 'Smiles' Fundraiser honors the memory of law enforcement alumnus



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Freelance Reporter

Sigma Alpha Epsilon's brothers cross the finish line of the Smiles for Miles 5K.

Blase Gapinski
Freelance Reporter

On Saturday, April 6, Sigma Alpha Epsilon hosted their first Smiles for Miles 5K fundraiser for the community to commemorate their brother Jesse Hernandez.

SAE collected \$10 from participants to walk or run the course, with all proceeds donated to the Thin Blue Line of Michigan, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families of law enforcement who have been injured or died on the job.

The race began at the North Quad and took participants across campus. Sigma Alpha Epsilon raised over \$5,000 for the organization through proceeds and donations. The event is planned to become an annual tradition dedicated to all members of law enforcement while honoring their brother who was an active member of that field.

Hernandez died on Nov. 5, 2023. Fairfax County police officers found Hernandez dead at the scene of a shooting. According to MidMichigan Now, the 911 caller said someone was "unintentionally shot inside

of an apartment."

Hernandez graduated from Ferris in December 2022 after obtaining his Bachelor's degree and a Master's in criminal justice. During his time on campus, Hernandez served as SAE's vice president. His love for CrossFit and law enforcement was the inspiration behind the fundraiser.

Nursing senior and SAE member Tommy Johnson was welcomed into the fraternity with open arms by Hernandez.

"He meant a lot to me," Tommy said. "He was always a cheerful guy and was a good friend to me. He was one of the guys that was there for me when I first started and if you needed help with something, he'd be there for you from start to finish."

Tommy felt that Hernandez impacted his brothers and inspired them with his positive attitude. He was a role model to Tommy and the rest of the members and will continue to guide them with the mark he made on the fraternity.

"He was a real lead from the front type of guy," Tommy said. "He led by example and

legacy-wise, he left a ton of joy. We all fondly remember him, he's everything we all wish we could be. All the stuff he's taught me, I'm going to carry with me for the rest of my life."

SAE president Dustin Herrmann was one of the many coordinators of this event. Herrmann wanted to remember Hernandez in a way that everyone could get involved with.

"We decided to go with the 5K because maintaining his physical health was something he loved and all of the proceeds are going to a really good cause," Herrmann said. "We went with the name 'Smiles' because that was one of his nicknames. You could tell him bad news and he'd still find a way to smile through."

For SAE, bringing the community together is a way to memorialize Hernandez and the positivity he left behind. Herrmann wants to continue this event annually to keep his legacy alive while sharing it with others.

CONT. ON PG. 6

A cultural ride

Students get a taste of countries around the world

Ni'Jah Rankin
Culture Reporter

The 34th annual International Festival of Cultures showed Ferris students a glimpse of many different cultures from around the world on Sunday, April 7.

The festival represented cultures by having their cultural foods and presenting their cultural dances.

Executive Director of International Education Tara Braun explained the importance of showing people other cultures and gave Ferris' international students a chance to represent where they are from.

"It is an opportunity for the international students to have a format and display their culture, their food and share it with people," Braun said. "It's an opportunity for campus and the greater community to see how exactly how many countries are represented in our little area of the world."

Many of the volunteers

were international students representing their home countries.

Braun also went into detail about the international students and their importance on campus.

"We have 34 countries that are students represent," Braun said. "They're a resource we need to tap into and learn from."

Accounting sophomore Adesola Ojo was glad to volunteer and represent Nigeria at the festival.

"I was really excited to join and participate in holding the festival," Ojo said. "It's really exciting for people to get to know that part of Nigeria."

Students were able to walk around the David L. Eisler Center ballroom and try different foods including jollof rice from Nigeria, chicken biryani from India and bulgogi from South Korea.

A crowd of about 250 students and the Big Rapids community were provided with passports to "travel the world" and get stamps from

20 different countries, which can also included in a raffle.

Biotechnology sophomore Prasanna Maharjan helped ensure the event went smoothly as the head of the food department.

"We make sure the food and everything is authentic," Maharjan said. "Everyone who is cooking the food is the people from that country."

Social work freshman Ana(liese) Mosley expressed how her first time at the festival was great.

"It was amazing. There were many varieties of food and was a lot of fun," Mosley said. "It was nice to talk to everybody at the individual booths to get to know a little bit more about what the food was or the background behind it."

Pharmacy junior Coco Zheng is also an international student from China. Zheng has been involved in this event before and was happy to be a part of the International Festival this year.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Sophomore Yuheng Zhang serves freshman Nina Oliver traditional Chinese food.



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Freelance Reporter

Hundreds of community members begin the 5K at Ferris' North Quad.

RUNNING MILES CONT.

"I think it's really important to celebrate who Jesse was and the memory of him," Herrmann said. "He was the happiest person I knew and was a great leader for us younger guys. He was such a great guy and it's a way to continue recognizing that."

Community member Matt Johnson showed his support by participating in the race. His nephew, Tommy, had mentioned the event to him,

show support."

Matt reiterates the idea of the community coming together. Events like these show how important it is to take advantage of the time that we have with loved ones.

"It's about showing support and being there for one another. It brings awareness to the idea that life isn't forever. We need to cherish all the time we have with each other, and we need to be careful and responsible," Matt said.

Ferris and SAE alumnus

"Smiles... was one of his nicknames. You could tell him bad news and he'd still find a way to smile through."

so he and his family gladly came to help the cause.

"I know lots of people just casually walked through the course," Johnson said. "I mostly walked and finished just over 33 minutes. It's about being social and seeing faces you haven't seen in a long time. It's great for active people and for people who just want to be here to

Jerod Goodale returned for this event to represent his best friend and spoke about him after the race. He met Hernandez his freshman year in the dorms, and the two instantly formed a bond.

"When we first got here at Ferris, we kind of hit it off right from the start," Goodale said. "We decided we were going to try and figure this

college thing out together. He was a great guy that would never ask you to do something you wouldn't want to do or he wouldn't do himself. Similarly, he was someone you could always count on. His nickname is Smiles and I think that says a lot. Year to year, even if something bad was going on, he'd still find a way to crack a grin."

Goodale was shocked to receive the news about his friend. He was appreciative to have the opportunity to attend the event and honor his friend with such high regard. It has made him reflect on the idea that tomorrow isn't promised and each day is a gift.

"The time that we all get with each other is finite and that's both beautiful and cruel," Goodale said. "We cherish the times we can with one another by making the most of everything and that shows through events like this. It's all finite and we are blessed with the time that we have with each other."

For donation inquiries and more information regarding the Thin Blue Line of Michigan, visit their website: tblofmi.com.

Strut and stride

YBBW hosts 32nd annual fashion show



Photo courtesy of YBBW

Members of You Beautiful Black Woman take the Williams Auditorium stage for the organization's prom themed fashion show.

Ni'Jah Rankin
Culture Reporter

Ferris State's You Beautiful Black Women chapter spent the night of April 6 setting up and strutting the runway for their prom-themed annual fashion show.

With a crowd of 30 people, the audience came in their best prom-themed clothes to watch and support the models as they dressed up for the different scenes, like "suit and tie" and "lovers and

friends."

YBBW's president and social work junior Kylah Robinson wanted the fashion show to be a time for students to get out and have a fun night.

"It's to promote student involvement and to get people out of their dorm," Robinson said. "This gives everyone a chance to come together."

The show was interactive as the crowd loudly cheered for the models and their runway outfits. During the intermission, the audience mem-

bers and YBBW were able to interact with each other while snacking and drinking.

Robinson believes it's uncommon for Ferris to throw Saturday events where you get to interact with other students. This event welcomed all students to let loose and have fun.

"You can just listen to music, be yourself and show your individuality," Robinson said.

Along with cheers from the crowd, more audience

engagement presented itself. The audience members dressed their best, and some had the opportunity to walk up on the stage to show off their outfits.

Early education freshman Jenaysha Warren was one of the models. She enjoyed participating in the show and believed things ran smoothly, even though she joined the show at the last minute.

"It wasn't a bad experience, but it was definitely frustrating," Warren said. "I

found an outfit the day before the show and it all came together the day of the show."

Social work sophomore Aaliyah Walker attended this fashion show to show support to some of her friends.

"I knew a few people that were going to walk and I was very excited to see them," Walker said. "This is my first time going to any event like this and I really liked it."

The show ended with Robinson sharing her appreciation for everyone and hand-

ing flowers to YBBW's advisor Rolonda Gleason.

Kylah Robinson is a former Torch employee.

Ni'Jah Rankin is a member of YBBW.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Sophomore Nhi Tran, freshman Selena Pham and freshman Lucy Tran show off Vietnamese garb.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Public health student Ruchita Bhavsar performs an Indian folk dance.



Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Senior Hanna Haile, sophomore Rena Sani and sophomore Yasmin Hassan dish out traditional Ethiopian food.

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: Dear freshmen What I wish I knew



Photo courtesy of Jessica Oakes

Kaylin Vandermissen, Cora Hall, Jessica Oakes and Marissa Russell from the Torch's 2020-2021 editorial staff during Jessica's freshman year.

Jessica Oakes
Editor in Chief

Dear freshmen,

As summer break approaches and the sun emerges from the clouds in the shade of Big Rapids gray, I know you're itching to get out. If you haven't yet, I invite you to take inventory of your life as a college student.

This year may have introduced you to your deepest passions and closest friends. It may have tested you in ways you never want to experience again. There's a good chance it did both. Whether you feel at home on this campus or painfully ready to leave it, recognize how far you've come.

When I finished my freshman year as a fully-remote COVID graduate in northern Michigan, I was starving for more experiences. I'd felt limited by my location, the pandemic and anxiety around being a beginner. There was so much I didn't understand yet. I could feel that and all its frustrations.

Something I want to tell underclassmen at the Torch that makes me feel one million years old is that they need to be alive longer. They need to do these things for more time. I've read and written more articles than I can count, but I can't offer anyone advice that will allow them to skip the lesson of firsthand experience. That's all college is.

If you think anything you've done in your first year of college was terrible enough to ruin the next three—or more—ahead of you, you're wrong. College is a series of wild expectations and honest mistakes that move you forward while you're still young enough to bounce back. If you think your freshman year was imperfect, I need you to know that nobody ever expects perfection from you at this stage.

Back in 2021, I wish I knew that nobody was mad at me. Without constant classroom validation and in-person interactions, I never knew how my work was received. I wish I knew everything I did my way, and there was no

correct way that everyone around me compared me to. I wish I knew all the nice things people said about me when I wasn't in the room.

The day I heard from my first editorial staff that they genuinely enjoyed my story ideas, I finally felt like there was a place for me at Ferris.

Freshmen, I am only one out of hundreds of people to remind you that your time here will end one day. If you hated anything about how this year went, you have every right to change it. For college and the rest of your life from now on, there is no singular path you must follow.

I find it hard to regret anything from the past four years, but there are a few thoughts I can't shake. I can't

stop thinking about every person I thought was cool but never got around to becoming friends with. I remember events I didn't go to and jobs I didn't apply to. I remember ending every semester believing that I wouldn't be able to do it all. I was always wrong.

The freedom of summer-time is only weeks away. Still, I beg you to see and feel the freedom we share as students. We give this school our money, time, effort and sanity, it is our right to take as many experiences from it in return as we possibly can.

Have fun this summer, this fall and every fall that comes after.

Shifting gears

Getting my license as a college senior



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

Kourtney Fairchild
News Reporter

I am 22 years old and got my driver's license three weeks ago.

Some of my friends got theirs in high school and others only got theirs a few months ago. Either way, I am the last of my friends to get a license.

There are so many reasons I didn't have my license, the main reason being that I didn't feel ready.

I'm a very anxious person, and I do not do well in high-pressure situations. The idea of driving has always been incredibly intimidating to me. Driving is about paying attention and being able to make quick decisions, two things I'm not very good at.

At every family gathering, I've been paraded with questions about when I would get my license. I didn't understand why it mattered, but it did.

All my friends graduated or moved off campus my junior year, and I was stuck without a meal plan or a car. I had never lived in a place with a Walmart or Meijer within 20 miles, let alone in town. I was used to small, family-owned grocery stores within walking distance. Now, my only options were Rite Aid and Walgreens.

Not being able to get my groceries felt embarrassing, so I saved money and bought a car to learn how to drive. I practiced as often as possible and scheduled my road test, so I was unable to chick-

en out. Before I could take my road test, my car broke down and was towed out of the gas station parking lot. Shortly after my car was fixed, it started overheating. The cost to fix that problem was more than my car was worth, and I was once again carless.

These setbacks just added to the immense anxiety I already had about driving, and I felt less ready to get my license than ever.

At the beginning of the semester, I decided driving was a main priority, and I wasn't letting myself put it off any longer. I had to get a real job and be a real adult soon, which meant I needed a license.

I knew the anxiety I had about driving was completely normal and justified, but I

couldn't let it control me anymore. Not being able to drive impacted every single aspect of my life.

I saved to buy another car and practiced as much as I could until it was time for the real thing. I took my road test, and not a single part was as bad as I had made it out to be in my head.

I have a sense of freedom now that most people experienced when they were 16 to 18. It's hard not to be embarrassed by this, but at the same time, no one would know if I hadn't written this article.

Getting my license isn't any less of an accomplishment because a lot of my peers did it first. I've learned to embrace my successes, even if they're embarrassing.

NFL ban of the hip-drop tackle



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

Jeffery Walker
Sports Reporter

The NFL is shaking up the league with the decision to ban the hip-drop tackle to reduce the amount of injuries on offensive players at the league's latest annual league meeting.

Banning the hip-drop tackle is another rule that puts defensive players at a disadvantage and an injury risk.

For player safety, the decision to ban the tackle was approved unanimously by the league, and they clearly state in Rule 12, section 2 and Article 18 what the hip drop

tackle is.

"Article 18. Hip-Drop Tackle. It is a foul if a player uses the following technique to bring a runner to the ground: Grabs the runner with both hands or wraps the runner with both arms and unweights himself by swiveling and dropping his hips and/or lower body, landing on and trapping the runner's leg(s) at or below the knee.

Penalty: For a Hip-Drop Tackle: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down."

The ban on this tackle had increased pressure because of injuries to football stars such as Tyreek Hill, Rhamon-

dre Stevenson and Mark Andrews.

I understand the reason this tackle is banned, but this is taking physicality out of the sport of football and, in doing so, we can see more injuries on the defensive side of the ball because now defenders will have to tackle offensive players that are moving at speeds of 20 miles per hour.

This decision affects multiple aspects of the game because it makes the job harder for defensive players and puts more pressure on referees. Many players, both active and current, have chimed in to give their thoughts on

the tackle being banned and how it puts defensive players at a disadvantage and at risk of being injured themselves.

Wanting the game to be safe is one thing, but the integrity of the game should still be the primary goal. This is football, and sports injuries unfortunately happen. Yes, it should be as safe as possible, but now it seems like we are trying to limit ways the defense can make plays.

Another issue that will arise as the season starts is the referees, who already have a difficult job and have been known to make mistakes, now could call a flag

on this tackle during a critical point in the game. The goal should be trying to make the referees' job easy, not adding another thing to call that can upset football players, coaches and fans.

What does this ban mean for college and Ferris football? Coaches have to find new ways for their defenders to tackle offensive players. For now, the NCAA rules committee has decided to table the talks of adopting this rule the NFL has approved. Ferris and other college coaches can at least start to prepare their players to avoid this tackle in the future.

As a huge football fan, I can see the disaster the ban on this tackle can cause, the flags that are thrown in critical games and moments, the fines that will be given to players and the outrage it will cause to fans.

With this recent ban on hip-drop tackles, it is clear that football is slowly becoming less physical and that this ban is detrimental to the sport of football overall as the safety and concern for defensive players to the side.

Sports

Dylan Rider | Sports Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu



Photo courtesy of Ana Sofia Hernandez Ferrer

Ana Sofia Hernandez Ferrer (left) and her sister Maria Fernanda pose together.

FROM MICHIGAN TO MEXICO CONT.

"The tournaments in Mexico were completely different because they were always individual," Ana said. "Here, there are individual matches, but you represent the

team and the university, so it makes it much more enjoyable and exciting."

The sister's freshman year ended with the team missing the GLIAC playoffs, but not without Ana earning an all-GLIAC team honorable mention.

Maria and Ana found it challenging to adapt to the new way of life, being thousands of miles away from their first home, but with them facing the task together, they adjusted to Ferris with guidance from the community.

A fellow teammate of the Ferrers, senior Amelia Laverdiere is no stranger to adjusting to a new country either. Laverdiere came to play tennis at Ferris from Quebec, Canada.

"Being with other international students means we can relate with things," Laverdiere said. "Even if we're far away from home, we all learn so much about being on our own and meeting people who can help us positively."

The Ferris tennis programs are known to recruit internationally, with four of the 11 women's team members from different countries.

Ana and Maria are both flourishing for the Bulldogs in their second season and aiming toward a GLIAC championship ring later this month. Beneath the surface of their athletic play, the sisters' perseverance and adaptability shine bright through their characters.

"With the help of my

friends, team and coach, I realized even though I was far away from family, I was forming another family here

in Big Rapids," Maria said. "At the end of the day, I wouldn't trade the memories I've made here for anything."



Photo courtesy of Maria Fernanda Hernandez Ferrer

The Ferrer sisters embrace after a tennis match.

Lion tamers

Bulldog softball sweeps doubleheader against Purdue Northwest Pride

Nolan Matthews
Freelance Reporter

Ferris State softball team swept Purdue Northwest in a doubleheader matchup on Saturday, April 6 in Hammond, Ind.

The Bulldogs (17-18, 5-5 in GLIAC) were scheduled to play in three doubleheaders between Tuesday, April 2, and Sunday, April 7, but all games outside of Saturdays were postponed. Ferris took both games against the Pride (18-16, 3-5 in GLIAC) with a score of 1-0 and then 4-2 on Saturday.

Senior pitcher Aryn Gallacher pitched a complete game in the first match for the Bulldogs. Gallacher only conceded three hits and walked one batter while striking out four.

Gallacher credited her dominant performance to the team's fielding and defense.

"I believe a big part of my success is my ability to trust my defense behind me, they've grown tremendously over the season," Gallacher said. "I just know if I put the ball in play, my defense will work for me."

The Bulldogs' four hits came from freshman first baseman Alexis Kozlowski, freshman shortstop Emma Gillard and sophomore designated player Abby Meyer,

with the lone run coming on a two-out RBI double from junior outfielder Maddie Gkekas.

In the second contest, freshman outfielder Ella McDonald's 2-for-3 outing, which included an RBI, helped best Purdue Northwest again.

Freshman Ashley Webb started on the mound for the Bulldogs. The North Liberty, Iowa native pitched six innings, allowing five hits, two earned runs and striking out three in the victory. Sophomore Izabella Regner relieved Webb in the seventh inning pitching but was replaced by Gallacher after 0.2 innings, as she walked two. Gallacher then closed out the game with a one-out save.

The first run came on an error, which scored Meyer. Catcher Emily Killion went 1-for-3 with an RBI, and Meyer went 2-for-2 with an RBI.

Coach Jake Schumann felt the team managed itself well against GLIAC foes.

"We put ourselves in a good position in the middle of the pack," Schumann said. "So far we've done a good job of splitting with Saginaw as well as Grand Valley, who are coming off a national championship appearance last year. "Our only setback was the Davenport series and hopefully we can

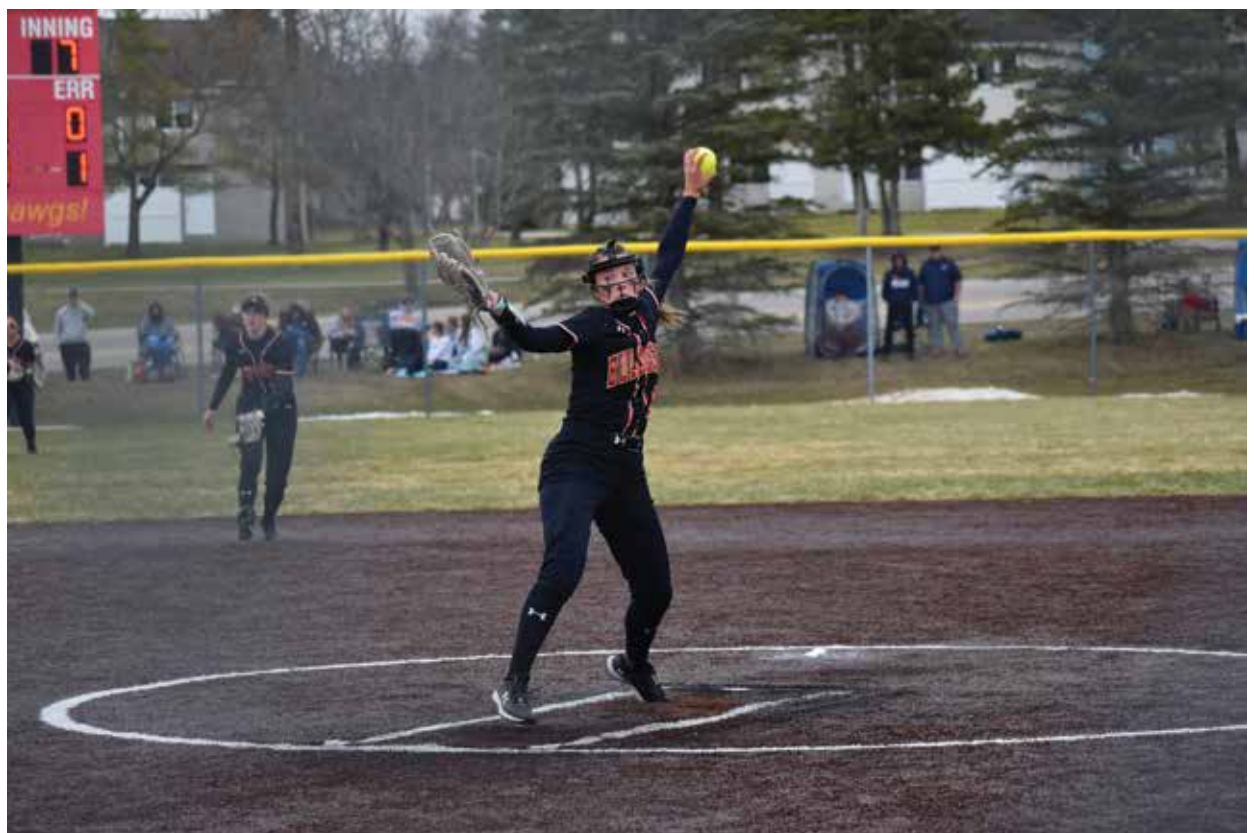


Photo from Torch Archives

Freshman pitcher Ashley Webb pitches against the Saginaw Valley Cardinals on Monday, March 25.

continue getting better every day." After their victories on Saturday, the Bulldogs were scheduled to face the Wisconsin Parkside Rangers on Sunday. Ferris' games were postponed to Monday, April 8. The Bulldogs split these matches on Monday with a 6-5 loss before rebounding

with a 12-3 win.

Kozlowski knows the flexibility that spring athletes must have with the weather in the Midwest.

"No, I wouldn't say it throws us off, as college athletes in Michigan we have to stay flexible because of the weather, we just have to

keep each other checked in and focused through these changes," Kozlowski said.

The Bulldogs will have played a doubleheader against the Wayne State Warriors on April 9 by the time this article is published. Ferris will then have another set of games against the Daven-

port Panthers at home on Saturday, April 13, at 2 and 4 p.m. The team will then hit the road to face archrival Grand Valley State Lakers in Allendale on Sunday, April 14, at 1 and 3 p.m.

Record-setting season

Looking back on women's basketball's historic season

Caden Hofmann
Sports Reporter

Ferris State women's basketball's 2023-24 season was the most successful in program history, as they finished with a record-breaking 26-6 record and a trip to the Final Four for the first time.

Entering the season, the Bulldogs were ranked No. 20 nationally. The team had lofty expectations from their 17-12 record in 2022-23, returning all five starters and regaining red-shirt junior guard Kady Blanchard, who missed all of the previous season with an ACL tear.

One of the returning seniors was forward Chloe Idoni, who had captured 1,000 points and earned All-GLIAC recognition in the 2022-23 season. Idoni did not mince words when speaking about the 2023-24 season expectations.

"Before the season we talked a lot about our goals," Idoni said. "Winning a national championship was our main goal and we did not want to sell ourselves short."

Ferris lived up to their expectations early, as they went 6-1 in November and December and climbed up to No. 5 in the national rankings before dropping a con-

ference game to Wisconsin Parkside. After the loss to the Rangers on Dec. 19, the Bulldogs knocked off the defending champions and No. 1 team in the nation, the Ashland Eagles. The Bulldogs snapped the Eagles' 45-game win streak in a thrilling fourth-quarter comeback by a score of 66-62.

Blanchard believed their match against Ashland to be a statement game for the team.

"We knew we had a real chance to make a deep tournament run and we had the opportunity to prove it against a team like Ashland," Blanchard said. "We showed we aren't the underdog and we deserve to be up there with the great teams."

Ferris continued their dominance through January, going 8-1 in that month, including a win over a No. 1 ranked team for the second time when they knocked off Grand Valley State on January 20 with a score of 71-65.

Blanchard thought the "aura was different for that game" against Grand Valley and that the Bulldogs "were good enough to win that."

Going into February 15-2, the Bulldogs closed out the regular season in dominant fashion, closing out the reg-

ular season 6-2 and finishing 21-4, which was good enough for second in the GLIAC behind Grand Valley.

Ferris's 14-3 record in the GLIAC earned them the second seed in the conference tournament. The Bulldogs defeated Saginaw Valley in their GLIAC quarterfinal game 54-47 but dropped the semifinal game to Northern Michigan by a score of 63-56.

The loss in the GLIAC tournament did not end their season, and the team used the loss to the Wildcats as motivation. Senior guard Mallory McCartney stated that the Bulldogs' loss was not how the team wanted to define their season.

"We were all very upset, but our coaches told us we needed to turn the page and learn from the game going into the NCAA tournament," McCartney said. "That game didn't take away from us wanting to leave a legacy by making a big run in the tourney."

Even though Ferris did not win their conference tournament, they built a strong enough resume to earn the No. 3 seed in the Midwest Region of the DII NCAA tournament.

The Bulldogs matched up

against No. 6 seed Lewis in the first round of the NCAA tournament and won convincingly by a score of 75-53 to move onto a rematch with the defending national champions and No. 2 seed Ashland.

Ashland only had one loss, which was against the Bulldogs earlier in the year, going into the matchup with Ferris. The Bulldogs got the better of Ashland for the second time this season, beating the Eagles 64-59 to move on to the Sweet Sixteen versus No. 1 seed Grand Valley. Ferris then took down the longtime Laker rival 49-46 in a defensive battle to advance to the Elite Eight for the first time in

program history.

The Bulldogs traveled to St. Joseph, MO where they knocked off the No. 6 seed University of Tampa 60-53 to further extend their historic season. Ferris' season closed with a loss in the Final Four to Texas Woman's University.

Idoni believes how close they were as a team propelled their record-breaking season.

"The chemistry our group has is unmatched and it translated to success on the court," Idoni said. "Every single one of us worked so hard and trusted one another throughout the process"


Ferris fell in the Final Four,

but the season was a major success. The Bulldogs were ranked No. 3 in the nation in the final rankings of the year.

Ferris had McCartney, Idoni and Blanchard named to the All-GLIAC first team. Idoni was named to the All-GLIAC defensive team alongside junior guard DeShonna Day.

The Bulldogs graduating are three seniors in McCartney, Idoni and senior center Amaka Unobagha.

With a new standard set for Ferris women's basketball, the Bulldogs will have even taller expectations to climb in the 2024-25 season.



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PLAYER'S CORNER: Jordan Brooks

Jordan Brooks talks expectations and goals for the Bulldogs' next season

Jeffery Walker
Sports Reporter

The men's basketball season is over, and they now shift their focus to next season, where they have the same goal and expectations even after losing some key players who were seniors.

Redshirt freshman guard Jordan Brooks answered a few questions regarding expectations for himself and the team, advice from seniors and goals from the past season.

Q: This season has come with some success, and how can this team get back

to this level of success this year after losing some key players?

A: Like you said, we're losing the six seniors that most often played. To correlate that to next season, we are learning what we learned last year and doing what our seniors told us to do. We keep working since they say we will have a big target on our back. We've been in the gym, locked in and working out, doing what our coach says. I know next season will be a lot harder than this season.

Q: You spoke about what the seniors have told you. Overall, what have you

learned from the seniors that helped you with your game and adapt to college basketball?

A: They helped me a lot because many of our guys are sixth-year seniors. They have been through so much. They told us to stay in the gym. I know Dolapo [Olayinka] went through multiple surgeries. He tells us to stretch and stretch a lot because you never know when your body will give up. They say to live in the weight room. Every day, we should get stronger since we're going to face teams that are more physical, stronger and

bigger than us. So keep staying in the gym, stretching, getting shots up, and working on your game.

Q: Is there any aspect of your game that you have particularly tried to grow and continue to get better at to help the team or even to better yourself for this upcoming season?

A: When I came in from high school, I was like a shooter doing three-point shooting. When I came here, I couldn't hit anything. Bronkema told me to start working on getting to the basket and finishing above the rim. I've been doing that for most of the season to get stronger. I couldn't dunk last year. This year, I can now dunk and get above the rim because I have been in the weight room. So it's been getting to the rim, finishing through contact and my ball handling too. I know I'm going to have to play a lot of guard next year.

Q: After being here for a couple of years, are you ready for a bigger role to come?

A: My coaches always say to be ready. They said next year, you got to have a bigger role, so I'm ready for it. I've been in the gym since our season ended, thinking about next year. Whatever task is in front of me, I'm ready to take it and strive through it.

Q: The goal every season is to have that success to win the GLIAC championship, then to go to the tournament, have a good run and win it all. Were there any other goals for this team that the coach may have mentioned for you guys?

A: In the past couple of years, we haven't won the GLIAC tournament since 2018. So, our goal was to win the GLIAC tournament and then to get past the second round of our re-

gionals. Then our assistant coach said [our goal was the] national championship because we had the guys to do it this year. Unfortunately, we fell short. I'm fairly certain that next year's goal is to get back to the Elite Eight and get as far as possible. We have big expectations next year.

Q: You mentioned the expectations. Does that kind of like wear on you a little bit that you have those types of expectations that this program has?

A: I came here to win. I know they have high expectations. I want to be a part of that. Just win no matter how hard expectations are. Doesn't matter to me. I'm pretty sure all of our teammates feel that way. They want to win. That's why they came here to play for Bronkema.



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Photo courtesy of Jordan Brooks

Redshirt freshman Jordan Brooks played in 18 games in 2023-24.

Noah Giesbrecht transfers

The junior goaltender started 50 games for the Bulldogs

Dylan Rider
Sports Editor

Junior goaltender Noah Giesbrecht announced his transfer to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on Wednesday, April 3,

Giesbrecht's announcement came in an Instagram post. The White Rock, British Columbia native played in 62 games for the Bulldogs from the 2021-22 season to the 2023-24 season.

"Forever grateful for the last three years at Ferris," Giesbrecht wrote. "Thankful to have had the opportunity

to be a part of this team and culture. I'm excited to be able to announce the next steps of my hockey journey, as I have decided to continue to pursue my athletic and academic career at RPI."

The 6-foot-4 netminder's name was entered into the transfer portal on March 26. Giesbrecht is the second Bulldog to transfer from the university this offseason, as senior forward Antonio Venu transferred to Merrimack. Senior goaltender Logan Stein, who split starts with Giesbrecht since 2021-22, is also in the transfer portal.

In his time as a Bulldog, Giesbrecht posted a career .898 save percentage and a 3.35 goals against average in 62 games played.

RPI is a university located in Troy, N.Y. The RPI Engineers finished the 2023-24 season with a 10-23-4 record overall and a 6-13-3 record in the ECAC conference.

For more information on Ferris hockey transfers, please visit <https://fsutorch.com/category/sports/hockey/>