



Construction underway

Ferris students to build pavilion in Northend Riverside Park



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Editor in Chief

The Ferris State disc golf team is currently preparing their regional event season and the pavilion will be useful for additional visitors at the park.

Emma Walters
News Editor

Ferris State University construction management students have been contracted by the City of Big Rapids to build a pavilion in Northend Riverside Park.

The American Associated Construction Students organization is the lead team on the project, with about 12 members currently having a hands-on part of the building process.

ACS is open to all construction management students at Ferris, currently boasting 70 active members.

The group has a community service orientation, completing at least two community service projects in the local area every semester.

Included in this community service is a highway clean-up project that the group does every year.

These service projects allow students to get hands-on experience in construction while helping the community where they work and live.

ACS also makes at least two site visits to active construction sites each semester to experience the work in a live environment.

The project began when the City contacted the service chair of ACS with a request to build a disc golf pavilion for the Ferris Disc Golf Team.

Assistant Professor Jeremy Horton has been assisting ACS with the project since March.

"The City of Big Rapids knew that we did projects

like this, and they wanted to build a pavilion at North End Park for the disc golf team," Horton said. "They thought it would be perfect to integrate the Ferris State construction program into this.

The city contacted ACS in March and began discussing plans for the pavilion.

Horton included that he assisted with drawing up the plans for the pavilion, but beyond that, students were hands-on with speaking with city officials, deciding on building material, putting in orders and now putting the pavilion together.

Horton further explained that ACS service projects are just one aspect of the hands-on learning experience that the university provides.

"In the first couple of

years, they do a lot of hands-on work," Horton said. "We have a lab here where they build a house indoors and they pour concrete. I think that sets Ferris apart a little bit with the management degree they get here."

Construction management junior Ethan Slock serves as the community service chair for ACS.

According to Slock, the project offers a great opportunity for students to get real-life experience in the field.

"It's the first opportunity I've had to help lead the project, whereas in internships I'm just kind of supporting the team," Slock said. "We do the house lab every semester. It's structured and planned. With this project, myself and others have real-

ized that problems come up that need to be solved."

Slock also mentioned that the project allows the volunteers to practice skills not yet learned through the Ferris lab, such as setting up trusses.

First-year radiography major Calece Cory expressed the importance of being involved in the community in which you go to school.

"I think it's good to be involved, if you have the time and your grades are good," Cory said. "I think it would be good to in the future, have for your kids. I helped do this, and it shows that you were involved."

The project is expected to reach completion in late October or early November.

Currently, volunteers are

awaiting the arrival of supplies that were delayed.

Once the supplies arrive, volunteers will work on putting the exterior parts of the building on.

The city will hire other companies to complete roofing, but volunteers will have the opportunity to install windows and add finishing touches.

Materials for this project have been sourced locally, provided by Big Rapids Lumber & Hardware.

Construction management students interested in joining the organization and participating in similar projects can contact the president of ACS, Blake Thomas.

News

College campuses are subject to becoming their own mini cities based on infrastructure - what makes them this way and how does Ferris compare? **PG. 2**

Culture

Creating original art is already impressive, but it gets better. Kathryn Bailey, artist with no hands, displays her art and inspiring journey. **PG. 5**

Opinions

Streaming services are continuously evolving, but does this new style and stream fatigue impact the quality of the content? **PG. 9**

Sports

All time leader in points and goals for Maryland Lacrosse and national championship winner with the Bulldogs, lacrosse player Jared Bernhardt **PG. 10**



News

Emma Walters | News Editor | waltere8@ferris.edu

Michigan

Emma Walters
News Editor

At least four people have died, and eight others have been injured after a gunman drove a vehicle into a church and opened fire on the morning of Sept. 28.

The attack occurred at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Grand Blanc. The Sunday service was attended by hundreds of people.

Following the attack, the building was set on fire.

The suspect was identified as 40-year-old Thomas Jacob Sanford. He was killed on site after engaging in gunfire with police on the scene.

National

Emma Walters
News Editor

President Trump announced on Sept. 27 that the deployment of national troops has been ordered to Portland, Oregon.

According to Trump, the troops being sent to the city are designated to safeguard ICE detention facilities in the city.

The order arrived after a gunman carried out a deadly attack on a detention facility in Texas, killing one detainee. This incident is still under investigation

Military leaders are expected to be addressed regarding the situation early this week.

Global

Emma Walters
News Editor

A typhoon has killed at least 11 people and damaged hundreds of homes in the northern and central regions of Vietnam.

The typhoon made landfall in the evening of Sept. 28. The region has been battered by powerful winds and rain. Infrastructure has been destroyed, with houses losing roofs, bridges being swept away and roads being flooded.

Residents of the region have been urged to stay indoors. Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Minh Chinh has issued instructions to increase rescue and relief efforts.

Faculty spotlight

New museum assistant settles in



Photo courtesy of Joshua Begian-Lewis

Joshua Begian-Lewis looks forward to being apart of the Big Rapids and Ferris State community.

Blase Gapinski
Editor in chief

Joshua Begian-Lewis, who uses they/them pronouns, is the newest addition to the Jim Crow Museum and has been serving as the museum’s assistant for over a month.

Begian-Lewis plays a vital role at Ferris by supporting the Jim Crow Museum’s mission to educate and inspire. Through their organizational skills and commitment to meaningful work, they help preserve history, promote un-

derstanding and ensure that this powerful resource continues to impact students and the broader community.

After years in high-pressure corporate roles, Begian-Lewis sought a more meaningful path. Disillusioned by the profit-first mindset of logistics, they chose to leave that world behind and bring their skills to Ferris, where purpose and impact now guide their work at the Jim Crow Museum.

“I wanted to be part of something important and good,” Begian-Lewis

said. “What I enjoy the most is just knowing it’s an important message.”

Begian-Lewis didn’t follow a traditional academic path. While they began college, work demands eventually led them to focus on hands-on roles, including time as a nuclear pharmacy technician and an emergency dispatcher, which are jobs that demanded precision, patience and resilience. Later, they transitioned into logistics, managing contracts and building data systems from the ground up.

“The whole point of a degree is training in a skill, and I had those skills and experience within data management, spreadsheets, and running databases, but not the degree to prove it,” Begian-Lewis said. “I’d get rejected for jobs I was overqualified for within 15 minutes. It was frustrating. I think more places need to look at what someone can actually do, not just what’s on paper.”

CONT. ON PG. 4

Campuses as walkable cities

Ferris as its own environment



Photo by: Clark Vance | Photographer

Constant construction around Ferris’ campus over the last few years has disrupted students and locals preferred routes.

Marc Stoufer III
Freelance Reporter

In 2022, the city of Houston had a problem: too many cars. Like many cities across the country, it was nearly impossible to get anywhere without one. Considering the city’s 222 traffic deaths in 2020 alone— the sixth highest count in the U.S— officials knew they needed a change. They introduced “Vision Zero,” a plan to reinvent the city’s reliance on cars by tracking traffic incidents, educating the public about road safety and increasing walkable infrastructure.

In January, New York City— an area that has “the largest municipal fleet in the country,” with 30,000 vehicles— tackled a similar problem by introducing congestion pricing, which charged drivers more to drive in the city during times of peak traffic. Those behind the initiative hoped it would reduce traffic and raise money to improve transit systems, in addition to reducing traffic fatalities.

These initiatives, along with many others, attempt to address the lack of walkability in cities across the country. Increasingly, Americans want to rely less on their cars—

making that happen, though, can be complicated.

This situation is not universal. Outside the United States, walkable cities thrive. A study in the Nature Cities journal calls these “15-minute cities,” since most places that residents need to travel can be reached within 15 minutes. Of the 50 most walkable cities in the world, 45 are in Europe. Cities in Taiwan, Nepal and Japan also appear. No American cities make the list.

In the United States, walkable areas make up only 1.2% of metropolitan land area. Efforts to change that are increasingly difficult.

In 2024, Houston elected John Whitmire as its new mayor. In a statement, Whitmire’s spokesperson indicated that he was pulling back on support for Vision Zero. In February, President Trump shared in a social media post that New York’s “CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD. Manhattan, and all of New York, is SAVED.”

Why is it so difficult for American cities to increase walkability?

America’s network of highways began in 1956 through a bill signed by Dwight D. Eisenhower. At the time, cars

were seen as a sign of freedom. Driving a car meant anyone could travel further and faster than they had been able to before— and, since the assumption was that most Americans would own one, they could do so without having to rely on anyone else to get them there. As a result, cities expanded, and people got more comfortable traveling further regularly. This meant that the development of public transportation, an important factor in most “15-minute cities,” was far lower than in other countries, and newer attempts to add public transportation have to compete with existing infrastructure.

This complicated— and expensive— process of changing systems already built on top of older systems often makes any attempt to reinvent a city as walkable much more complex than making it walkable to begin with. As new building projects are approved, they get constructed in between, and sometimes on top of, preexisting structures, with unique applications of regulations, safety standards and bureaucracy. This is why Houston’s “Vision Zero” plan had a price tag of nearly \$30 million to make

necessary additions and improve surrounding infrastructure to match. It’s also why many programs like it are cancelled.

This leaves college campuses as seemingly the closest thing America has to a walkable city. Since campuses are, in many ways, self-contained communities, students can make a choice they often wouldn’t otherwise have— to not use their car.

I walk everywhere,” said Trevor Kacyak, a member of Ferris State University’s Way for Life Program. “Campus, and my apartment and my class.”

“I think (walkability) is really important for us,” Kacyak said, adding that increased walkability reduces the amount of traffic in a community.

Ferris State University also has a shuttle service that takes students between parts of the campus, an example of sustainable public transportation.

Digital Animation major Gavin Goodrich compared Ferris’s transportation to prior college experiences.

“Before I transferred here, I used to go to school in Chicago, so I know public transportation is very important,”

Goodrich said. “And walking was also a great option, because it’s more convenient. “

Goodrich added that living in a walkable area allows people who don’t have a car to get around more easily.

Traffic is something many advocates of walkable communities point to. Research found that the average driver spends the equivalent of nearly 2 days a year in traffic, and a single vehicle can produce 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide in a year.

Psychology major Karley Kowalewski chooses to walk to class to avoid parking tickets.

“I think (walkability) is a huge factor for a lot of people,” Kowalewski said. “Especially because in your early years, you’re living on campus, and that means you have to walk.”

Frequent construction can impede that walkability, though. Ferris State University recently started building its Jim Crow Museum, the construction of which blocks part of the sidewalks nearby. This comes after a long pattern of frequent construction projects on campus during the school year.

This construction is “very frustrating, if it’s blocking

people’s routes to class,” according to Goodrich. “(Construction) makes the walking a lot more annoying, especially with all of the noise,” Kowalewski said. “And then, there are certain areas closed, and it causes a lot more traffic, which can cause your walking to take longer.

Despite the structural diversity of America’s communities, one thing remains the same— cars are overwhelmingly the default mode of transportation, and Americans increasingly take issue with that. In a system so entrenched in existing infrastructure, though, adding alternatives often requires dismantling what already exists, a costly and difficult endeavor. That doesn’t mean change is impossible, though. The walkability of college campuses proves that a system built without a primary focus on cars can work, and advocacy groups are constantly trying to move the conversation towards change.

“The walkable city,” wrote author Mary Soderstrom, “is going to be the key to whatever success we have in meeting the challenges of the future.”

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CONT.

Though their work often happens behind the scenes, Begian-Lewis plays an essential role in the daily operations of the Jim Crow Museum. As the museum assistant, they serve as the first point of contact for visitors and inquiries, coordinate group tours, schedule traveling exhibits and help process donations. They also act as a docent when needed and handle various office administration duties that keep the museum running smoothly.

But even in these logistical tasks, Begian-Lewis sees the bigger picture. Preserving the past to educate the future.

“A lot of people don’t know what happened in that period,” Begian-Lewis said. “There was literally a student who walked by and asked, ‘Who is Jim Crow?’ It shows how important this work still is.”

While Begian-Lewis was drawn to the museum’s mission, their decision to join Ferris was also deeply personal. Their spouse was hired as a professor around the same time, and although they work in different departments, being part of the same campus community has made the transition especially rewarding.

“We don’t work closely, not even in the same department, but it’s worked out really well,” Begian-Lewis said. “It’s nice to be in the same place, and we even get to have lunch together most days.”

Although this job is the start of a new beginning, they aren’t chasing a title or promotion. They’re looking for a stable community like Big Rapids to call their home. After years of instability, they’re hopeful Ferris will be a long-term home.

“Every job I’ve had, I just wanted to find a place to settle in,” Begian-Lewis said.

“And I think I finally have.”

After years of navigating an unpredictable career path, Begian-Lewis has finally found more than just a job as they’ve found a sense of purpose, a community and a place to belong.

For students and professionals alike, their story highlights the importance of resilience, adaptability and staying true to what matters most.

“Don’t let rejection beat you down,” Begian-Lewis said. “The world can be stressful, but there’s a role out there for everyone. You just have to keep pushing and trust that you’ll eventually find the right fit.”

With a new facility expected to open in Fall 2026, the Jim Crow Museum continues to grow and rebrand in a direction that has the potential to reach new audiences and spark meaningful dialogue, staying true to its original mission.



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Contact The Torch Editor-in-chief Blase Gapinski for questions and more.

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ON THE RECORD

Emma Walters
News Editor

Reported hate crime

Sept. 27, 10:00 p.m. - A student made a report of threats and targeted misconduct via a CSA form. The matter has been referred to Title IX and Student Conduct. A potential sexual orientation bias was reported in association with the incident.

Who turned off the lights?

Sept. 26, 12:56 a.m. - Officers conducted a traffic stop on Northland Drive near Gilbert Drive on a vehicle for broken front and rear lights. Upon inspection the officers discovered that the driver was operating on a Michigan Temporary Instruction Permit without the required 21+ licensed passenger. The driver was issued a misdemeanor appearance citation. The vehicle was released to a licensed driver.

Custody Transfer

Sept. 26, 2:45 p.m. - Ferris officers met with a Michigan State Police Trooper in Morley to assist with a custody transfer involving an individual with an active misdemeanor warrant. The individual was transported to the Mecosta County Jails where he was lodged.

Culture

Grace Heethuis | Culture Editor | turnek29@ferris.edu

No hands, no limits

Artist Kathryn Bailey shares her story



Photo by: Tate Zellman | Freelance Reporter

Kathryn Bailey can be seen next to one of her prized pieces, which is featured as apart of her “She Grew Anyway,” series.

Tate Zellman
Freelance Reporter

Artist Kathryn Bailey brings “She Grew Anyway” to the art gallery, showing the community her art through her story and her perseverance. Bailey carries on the message “an artist with no hands and no limits” through her work. She was born with an amputation and doesn’t have a left or right hand. But the daily challenges have not stopped her from pursuing art and earning a BFA in painting and graphic design from Michigan State University. “She Grew Anyway” is a solo exhibition of Bailey’s that represents personal growth. Through soft explo-

sions of color, Bailey strives to show what it means to bloom while breaking, and that healing and preserving will help prevent slipping away from the world. The exhibit was held in the fine art gallery from Aug. 25 to Sep. 30. Bringing her artistic skills was a way of showing how an individual can have a unique journey and be able to present that journey without judgment. Bailey has a message that she hopes the Ferris community learns or takes away by viewing her artwork and her story. “This too shall pass,” Bailey said. “I know it sounds cliché, but if you’re going through and dealing with something, this too shall

pass and maybe you can make something beautiful out of it. The painful portions of life can be ones that you or anyone can turn into something beautiful that maybe somebody could see.” Bailey specializes in large canvas oil paintings, and she has shown her exhibitions in Manhattan, New York as well as various places in Michigan. To show her story through her art, Bailey has been painting flowers, and giving them meaning, in the sense that they’ll live longer through her work than if they were outdoors. “I started painting flowers because I noticed that they show time passing in a way that nothing else does,” Bailey said. “When you pick

flowers, they bloom and then they die. It’s just time because time takes everything. So that’s why I started painting flowers. To capture moments back. You can use your time and be productive with it.” When Bailey came to visit her exhibition at the gallery, her family was able to join her. Her family included her husband, son, mother, brother, nieces and nephews. Matt Champagne, Bailey’s younger brother, has seen Bailey’s struggles since they were kids. Overcoming those struggles has been something amazing to see. “She had her struggles growing up,” Champagne said. “To see everything she’s been through, the trials and difficulties, and to take

that whole journey and then to express it and show other people who she is through her art. Just the details and things that I could never do is amazing from my perspective.” Champagne also stated that Bailey helped coach him through painting and that she managed to finish a painting for him, which became an indicator that she was already an artist. Plus, recognizing her story has helped him with his personal life. “There’s been times that her art and her abilities have really helped me through difficult situations,” Champagne said. “That really does mean a lot and everything she’s been able to do has been awesome.”

Fine Arts Gallery and Museum Director Carrie Weis stated that the gallery wanted to include Bailey’s art because they were inspired by her artistic passion and skills. “I was captivated by her work and her story,” Weis said. “Her large-scale canvases—sculptural in form of expressionistic in style—radiate both physical, energetic and emotional depth. Each work reveals not only Bailey’s technical command of her medium but also her capacity to transform personal experience into universal statements of growth and strength.” Bailey’s “She Grew Anyway” and other artworks can be viewed on her Instagram at createdbykathryn.art.

A tangy fall tradition

Students reveal their cider mill experiences



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Editor in Chief

Hearty Harvest, located in Remus, is owned and operated by Natalie Pennington and Jette Sherman. It is the perfect place for fall filled activities.

Grace Heethuis
Culture Editor

Michigan is the third-largest producer of apples in the United States, and is home to over 100 cider mills that families enjoy visiting each year. Every fall, countless families flock to cider mills and apple orchards to spend time together and enjoy the activities these places offer. It is a tradition in many families to visit a cider mill at least once a year. Business administration freshman Jackson Altwies is one student who grew up going to cider mills every year with his family. “Growing up, we went at least once or twice every

year,” Altwies said. “They had certain activities like log rides, train rides and big slides where you go through a tube, and also a corn maze.” Aside from showing how apple cider is made, most cider mills offer a variety of family-focused activities for both kids and adults to enjoy. A popular activity at many cider mills includes eating warm donuts served with apple cider, usually made fresh on site. “The best part is the apple cider and the warm cinnamon donuts you get when you’re done,” Altwies said. Going to a cider mill is one way that many families take advantage of the cooling weather and color-changing

trees in the fall. “I think it’s an easy thing to bond over, and it’s just a fun and simple thing to do,” Altwies said. “You feel like you’re a young kid again.” One interesting part of cider mills for many people is getting to see the process of making apple cider from start to finish. Graphic media management senior Drew Gendron-Wesley enjoyed looking back at the learning experience that was offered during his trip. “I saw tons of apples get put into a big metal thing, then watched it get pressed and the juice come out, so literally seeing the process of it being made,” Gendron-Wes-

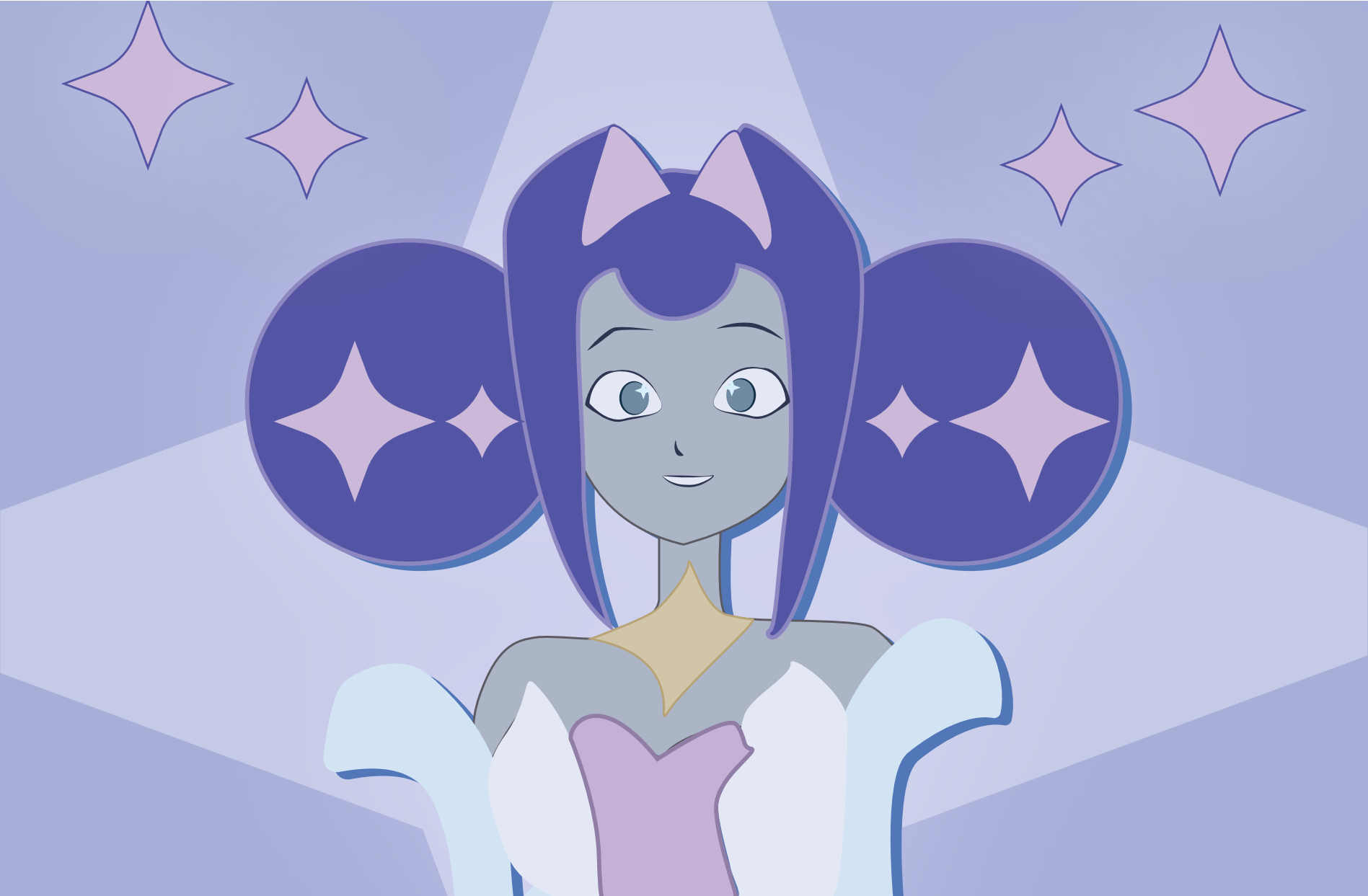
ley said. “I thought it was really exciting.” Although Gendron-Wesley didn’t go to cider mills regularly growing up, it is easy for him to see why it’s such a popular tradition in some families. “It’s something to do during the transition seasons, like from summer to winter,” Gendron-Wesley said. “So just being able to go out and experience the weather before it gets bad is something fun to do.” Visiting cider mills each year is popular in American culture, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States. However, some cultures don’t typically take part in this fall

activity. Freshman dental hygiene major Adeline Monarrez comes from two cultures where visiting cider mills isn’t a popular fall activity. “I’m mixed, I’m Mexican and Nigerian, but our cultures don’t really do that, though,” Monarrez said. Despite not having visited a cider mill herself, Monarrez reflected on why she thinks it’s a popular activity as the weather cools down. “I feel like, especially in Michigan, with all our apple orchards and all that, fall here is beautiful,” Monarrez said. “I think that gives people a really good reason to go out.” Cider mills can be an ex-

citing endeavor each year for families across Michigan, and are a tradition that many students enjoyed growing up. Although not all students have gotten the chance to visit a cider mill, they can still appreciate the fall tradition and spend time with loved ones. There are several cider mills located within a couple of hours of Big Rapids, including Uncle John’s Cider Mill, Robinette’s Apple Haus & Winery and The Fruitful Orchard and Cider Mill. Getting to witness the process of cider making and spending time as a family is a great way for students to soak up the changing weather.

Media minute

Knights of Guinevere



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Harmony Goodman
Production Manager

On Sept. 19, GLITCH released the pilot episode of their new 2D animated show, working with Dana Terrace, creator of the Disney animated series “The Owl House,” and within the first week of the pilot’s release it quickly gained over 11 million views. “Knights of Guinevere,” as described by GLITCH, is a psychological thriller set in an amusement park in the sky. On the planet below, we meet Frankie and Andi, two childhood friends who dream of living better lives as amusement park bot engineers. Guinevere, the theme park princess, is a system of bots that share a memory core to remember guest interactions in the park. When Frankie fishes out an old generation Guinevere bot in the shadows below, it quickly becomes the opportunity they needed to get the park’s attention. But the park has secrets, and it isn’t long before Frankie and Andi begin working on repairing and protecting the lost bot the crown forces. The plot alone isn’t all that’s attracting viewers; media blogs such as earlgame’s are questioning if

“Knights of Guinevere” is a callout to Disney and their industry. The reasoning behind this speculation has to do with the drama that “The Owl House” was subject to. Even though the show was very popular, Disney wanted to cancel the show because they feared it didn’t match the company’s brand, eventually leading to the show’s abrupt end. It’s not just “The Owl House.” Over the past few years, we’ve seen shows with LGBTQ+ representation get cancelled again and again. For instance, in the past three years, Disney has cancelled a total of four shows that showed LGBTQ+ representation. Even though all of these shows had their own reasons for being cancelled, fans are suspicious that Disney just can’t commit to a show giving good and accurate queer representation. After the cancellation of “The Owl House,” GLITCH reached out to Terrace and pitched a show without Disney’s restrictions, which became the “Knights of Guinevere.” GLITCH is all too familiar with restrictions; over the past few years, they’ve been trying to fight streaming platforms such as Netflix’s

censorship guidelines. Most known for their two animated series, “The Amazing Digital Circus” and “Murder Drones,” GLITCH has been uploading all of its content onto YouTube, growing the indie animation community. Outside of the show’s rumored calling-out of Disney, the show is beautifully animated, considering that the show’s 2D animation style is outside of GLITCH’s typical animation style, which is 3D rendering. The pilot episode itself does a great job at highlighting important plot points while still leaving the viewer with mysteries to solve and follow. GLITCH is used to developing psychological horrors, “The Amazing Digital Circus” being one of their most mysterious shows of all. Fan theories heavily plague GLITCH’s viewership. If you’re not a fan of psychological horror or shows that are intended to give viewers the creeps, I would avoid this one. However, if that genre is right up your alley, this may be the show for you. Especially for viewers looking for animation styles similar to “The Owl House” and the DreamWorks relaunch of “She-Ra: Princess of Power.”

Don’t worry, though. The “Knights of Guinevere” follows its own plot, and if the series gets the production greenlight, it will be its own stand-alone series for all to

enjoy. With the pilot episode’s success, I can’t say I will be surprised when the show gets the official greenlight to continue with the first season.

Overall, I rate “Knights of Guinevere” a 9/10. If you’re looking for a sci-fi-themed thriller, I recommend checking out the pilot episode.



Opinions

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

Our Location:
Arts and Science Commons 1016
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Big Rapids, MI 49307

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: Did I do college right? The senior year dilemma



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Editor in Chief

Blase (left) visiting his family in Mount Pleasant after spending too much time away from them.

Blase Gapinski
Editor in Chief

It finally hit me sometime this week, the realization that my time to enjoy the college experience is dwindling quicker and quicker each week. It still feels like just yesterday I was moving into North Hall in Aug. 2021 and getting settled in Big Rapids, which would eventually become my new home. Oftentimes, I still feel like that same 18-year-old guy, not having a clue what he was doing at university or how he would survive on his own.

Here I am now, with my fifth and final year underway, and it still doesn't feel like that much time has passed. I've been battling the question lately: was chasing academic success worth the fun times I missed out on during the last four years?

College pushes us to constantly plan, optimize and

prepare for the future, but in doing so, it often robs us of the present. As a senior, I'm realizing that the pressure to make the most of it can ironically leave you feeling like you never really did.

Students face expectations that often feel contradictory, like staying social and making time with friends, but also staying focused on assignments or projects. Some take it to another level: joining clubs, networking and trying to build a resume, which can make it extremely difficult to relax, have fun or make memories.

Rather than enjoying the time we have before starting a career, it feels like we're already wrapped up in one, due to school and other extracurriculars.

Personally, I feel guilty for working too much. I also feel guilty for not working enough. There is this constant turmoil between enjoyment and

achievement that feels never-ending.

Even here, at the Torch, I can relate to that. It always feels like there is something I could or should be doing.

Don't get me wrong, I love this so much. I worked so hard to get where I am today with this paper because I care so much about it. I just never thought I would see the day when the job I once dreamed of having is now keeping me up at night with dreams of missed deadlines and errors in the latest edition.

This doesn't even include the current load of courses I have, where projects and tests continue to pile up. Even having fun with friends feels like it is such a chore. Scheduling an outing with friends in advance becomes like some corporate group chat, trying to decide the best time to hold a weekly meeting.

Of course, I understand everyone has their own schedules, with crazy busy days and times when we want to relax with friends, but everyone operating on their own time makes it hard to enjoy these moments with the people you care about.

A question I have been trying to ask myself recently is, 'Are you really enjoying this, or just trying to check something off the college memory box?' I feel like this has helped me regulate and manage my time more while trying to graduate, yet still have a fun senior year.

As I move through this final year, I've been trying to accept that I may never find the perfect balance between productivity and presence.

Maybe that's not the point. Maybe it's less about squeezing every last drop out of college and more about being present for the little moments, the ones that don't

go in a scrapbook but live in late-night conversations, spontaneous hangouts and inside jokes no one else will ever understand.

I used to think the college experience was something I had to chase, kind of like a checklist I needed to complete before I walked across that stage. But now, I think it's less about the moments you plan for and more about the ones that sneak up on you.

I won't pretend I've done everything right. I know I've missed out on things, traded memories for deadlines and made compromises that still leave me wondering 'what if.' But I've also learned what I care about, what I'm capable of and what kind of person I want to be beyond this campus.

“Are you still watching?”

How streaming impacts good writing

Lucas Gill
Web Editor

Over the past decade, streaming services have undoubtedly shaken up the entertainment industry, allowing showrunners to ignore the 20-plus episode-per-season structure and to try out new ideas.

The way we consume media has changed significantly as well. “Binge culture,” the practice of consuming large amounts of content, whether it be movies, shows, books or social media, in a short amount of time, is the new approach.

Streaming services were designed to facilitate this specific experience, and it shows. Not just in our wallets every month, but in various aspects of a show’s writing.

When the current meta includes dropping a six, eight or ten-episode-long season all at once, it can harm a series’ overall narrative structure.

To abide by these guidelines, a show can feel either stretched thin, having to fill time over several forty-five or even fifty-minute-long episodes, or bloated, where the writers and showrunners are forced to cram various story beats into the limited time-frame.

While it ultimately comes down to what kind of story you want to tell, this structure still poses ever-present challenges for writers.

A recent example of this that immediately comes to my mind is Netflix’s “Arcane.” Both seasons of the animated series follow a three-act structure, with each containing nine episodes. While I think this format works for the first season, as the story was more grounded and character-driven, the cracks begin to show once season two begins.

Pacing was the Achilles’ heel for the show, as it had to balance almost too many subplots and fit them into only nine episodes. This led to some of the show’s characters not feeling fully realized and some storylines ending up underdeveloped, cited by fans and critics online as a disappointing end to the series, and through the seasons’ declining ratings.

Another example of how streaming fatigue affects creative projects comes with the various mini-series that Disney+ has to offer, mainly in its Marvel and Star Wars shows.

The company has seemed to turn away from releasing another feature-length Star Wars movie after the critical failure that was 2019’s “The Rise of Skywalker,” and has put more focus on creating mini-series to fill in the gaps of the series’ timeline.

It’s a similar case for Disney’s recent Marvel projects, with a mixed bag of one-season-long shows added to

their streaming service every year since 2021.

What’s confusing to me is: why so few episodes?

While some of these narratives, “Wandavision” and “Andor,” for example, are phenomenal in their nuanced storytelling, most of these mini-series end up becoming clunky messes that we look back on and laugh at.

Shows such as “Kenobi” or “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier,” which only have six-episode-long runs, would’ve benefited from either having a longer season to let their respective villains and supporting cast be more fleshed out or shortened to be a feature-length movie, as there are episodes in these shows that rely heavily on filler.

It’s upsetting, really. These shows I’ve listed as examples had the potential to be truly great, but were bogged down by their pacing and underdeveloped narratives.

This isn’t to say that every series suffers from streaming’s inherent restrictions. Series like “Fallout” and “Yellowjackets” that also feature seasons with shorter episode counts tell the stories they want to cohesively and creatively.

It’s not a small feat, since when it comes to tighter, more involved series like these, so much more emphasis is placed on their respective character and story



Graphic by: Lucas Gill | Web Editor

arcs. The risk of a whole season being written off as “bad” after any misstep increases the shorter it is.

Social media doesn’t exactly help the overall issues of modern binge culture.

While it serves as a powerful tool for gathering a wide range of opinions on a show or movie, the content it recommends can reveal the more problematic undertones of that side of the internet.

I frequently come across videos on my feed that seem less concerned with thoughtful analysis and more focused on being the first to publish reactions.

On one hand, I can understand the reasoning behind

why this happens; on the other hand, I find it deeply frustrating.

The initial buzz that surrounds the release of a new series often becomes a powerful motivator for content creation. Audiences are curious about a show’s quality. They don’t want to waste their time, so they go looking for reviews.

Yet, it frequently appears that many creators feel compelled to consume entire seasons in a single sitting, driven by the pressure to be the first to offer their commentary.

With each new release, my TikTok page seems to streamline these types of videos, turning media coverage into an arbitrary race to the bot-

tom, where speed is prioritized over substance.

I’m thankful others share my sentiment when it comes to this niche complaint I have. I’m glad that fans and critics alike aren’t afraid to voice their strong opinions when it comes to the pitfalls of this new way we consume media.

It’s always my goal to see others become more media-literate, to not just take the shows and movies we watch at face value.

After all, visual storytelling through shows and movies is a form of expression, and shouldn’t creativity have room to flourish?

Maybe my parents were right

Screentime and the result on mental health

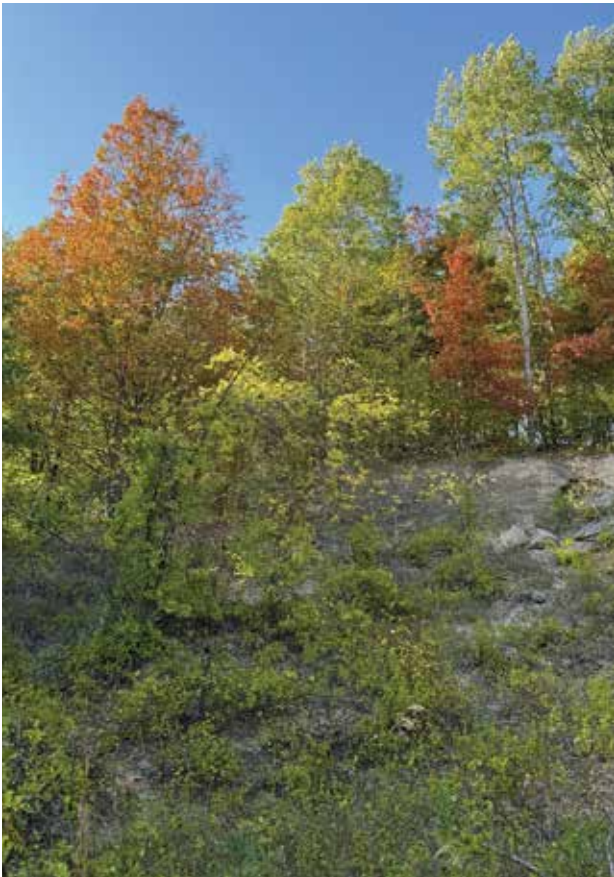


Photo by: Jackie Moglia | Opinions Editor
Clay Cliffs Nature Park in Big Rapids.

Jackie Moglia
Opinions Editor

After coming back from Alaska, I’ve come to an unfortunate realization: maybe it really is that damn phone.

Working outside full-time left little opportunity to be on my phone, and having no wifi most of that time helped keep my screen time levels down. Besides, why sit on my phone all the time when I could go out and look at mountains, go on drives with friends or do random side quests?

I have never been happier than when I was in Alaska.

The problem is now I’m back in Big Rapids. No mountains to be seen: only classes, work and occasional (okay, maybe weekly) trips to the bar with friends. When I’m not doing work or homework, I find myself curling up with my phone more often than not.

Coincidentally, I’ve also noticed a significant decline in the way I feel. Hanging out

with friends helps, the walks at the Huron-Manistee National Park help, but at the end of the day, that increase in screen time doesn’t.

It’s not just the screen, but the content we consume on it. I’ll admit, I love sad music, sad movies, sad edits of my favorite characters. I love it! I find a strange comfort in the familiarity of sadness. That being said, the content we consume has an impact on our mental and physical health.

How am I supposed to be happy when the media I consume isn’t? I know most of us have become victims of doomscrolling, and with the news coming out every day, it’s difficult not to. It’s hard to retain a positive mindset when X notifies me of horrible news headlines every hour.

When I think about my happiest moments from the summer, I’m not thinking about the time I spent on my phone. When I think of my saddest moments from the summer, I’m also not think-

ing about the time I spent on my phone. The most intense, real emotions I felt were in the moment, not through my screen.

In an unsurprising research study, MIT found that those with mental health struggles are more likely to consume negative content on social media, which, shockingly, only makes the mental health struggles more intense. With the way most social media algorithms work, once they see you seeking out this content or liking it, they’ll be sending more your way.

Getting off my phone isn’t as easy as I’d like it to be. After a long day of classes and homework, it feels almost necessary to unwind. It’s my connection to my friends around the world. The video chats act like a pick-me-up, but the social media scrolling that inevitably happens afterwards undoes it.

I could blame it on Big Rapids being a slightly boring town, not much to do without spending money, but it’s not

the full truth. It is ultimately up to me to get out of my room, to go on walks, hang out with friends and to take breaks from social media.

I don’t always want to go for a walk outside when I’m tired, but it helps to acknowledge what my brain needs.

I’ve tried setting time limits for myself on apps, but it’s fairly easy to simply override them. Social media hasn’t aided my sleep schedule, which again, doesn’t do my mental or physical health any favors.

At the end of the day, social media is meant to be addictive. It’s difficult not to get stuck in the loop of negativity. Small things matter- reducing our screen time little by little, spending a little bit more time in nature, turning your phone off an hour before you sleep.

It’s easier said than done, but we cannot grow as people, cannot heal, unless we do hard things first.

Sports

Nolan Matthews | Sports Editor | matthen4@ferris.edu

Jack of all trades

The life and career of former Bulldog Jared Bernhardt



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Bernhardt takes the snap from center Jake Boonstra during the 2021 D2 National Championship against Valdosta State.

Nolan Matthews
Sports Editor

A two-time national champion between Maryland and Ferris State, and being second all-time in points and goals for Maryland lacrosse, former Bulldog Jared Bernhardt has had quite the career.

Beginning at Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, Florida, Bernhardt was the starting varsity quarterback, racking up over 4,000 all-purpose yards and 30 touchdowns. He was also an All-American midfielder in lacrosse, where he scored 434 career points on 236 goals and 198 assists.

Being the third-ranked recruit in his class of 2017 in lacrosse, Bernhardt committed to Maryland and made a huge impact in his freshman year, helping lead the Terrapins to a 2017 national

championship.

Bernhardt spoke about his decision to go to Maryland and what it was like during his time there.

"I think my decision came down to the program itself," Bernhardt said. "The history of Maryland lacrosse speaks for itself, but my brothers went to Maryland as well and that was a huge factor, but I was familiar with the program, and I think the people there just kind of sold it to me."

In his final season at Maryland, Bernhardt had the greatest offensive season the Terrapins had ever seen and took home the 2021 Tewaaraton Award, which is given annually to the top male and female lacrosse players across the country. Bernhardt had 99 points, 71 goals and 28 assists, securing his spot atop Maryland's career

points and goals at the time of his final season.

Bernhardt was not done yet. With his time as a Terrapin being up, he decided to take advantage of the NCAA's "Five to play four" rule. This rule allows athletes one year of eligibility in another sport after they have exhausted eligibility in their primary sport, so Bernhardt took his talents to Ferris State.

Not wanting to be a part of the real world yet, Bernhardt decided to send emails across the country to schools of all levels, and Ferris was one of the schools that reached out to him.

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after school, and I wanted to maybe prolong my real world experience, and playing football sounded pretty good to me," Bernhardt said. "I was sending out emails and seeing if anyone would give me a chance,

and Ferris ended up being one of those programs."

That decision ended up being a great one for Bernhardt. During the 2021 season, he threw for 1,322 yards and 11 touchdowns, while adding 1,421 yards and 26 touchdowns on the ground en route to the first national championship in the program's history over Valdosta State.

Former Bulldog quarterback Mylik Mitchell spoke about Bernhardt as a teammate.

"I always looked at it as a blessing to be around a guy who has taken his path in multiple directions and been successful in those transitions," Mitchell said. "Jared always was a more reserved person who did his talking on Saturday, and so being able to pick things from his play style and way of thinking were big for me while at Fer-

ris."

With his college eligibility all used up, Bernhardt was able to participate in Maryland's pro day, but he went undrafted in the 2022 NFL Draft. Shortly after the draft concluded, he was signed as an undrafted free agent with the Atlanta Falcons and made the team's initial 53-man roster out of training camp.

Shortly after his NFL retirement in 2023, he was hired to be the director of player development for Maryland lacrosse. In June of 2025, he signed with the Denver Outlaws of the Pro Lacrosse League, in which he was named PLL First Team-All Pro and helped the Outlaws make a run to the championship game, which they lost to the New York Atlas by a score of 14-13.

Associate athletic director Rob Bentley is incredibly

proud of Bernhardt and his career.

"He was an unbelievable story," Bentley said. "He was going to come here then COVID-19 hit. Then he came here and nobody knew what to expect, and then he stepped on the field and in his first game he had a couple of big touchdown runs. He was just an incredible player, he was very fast and incredibly shifty. He did a really good job of orchestrating and leading the offense."

Only a month after signing with the Outlaws, Bernhardt was hired to be the assistant head coach for the University of Florida women's lacrosse team, which made it to the NCAA Semifinal against the University of North Carolina last season.

Bulldogs to start GLIAC play

Bulldogs travel to take on the Roosevelt Lakers



Photo by: Clark Vance | Photographer

Junior running back Zak Ahern carries the ball up the middle in the homecoming matchup against Rio Grande.

Nolan Matthews
Sports Editor

The Bulldogs will be heading to Chicago this week to face off against the newest member of the GLIAC, the Roosevelt Lakers.

The No. 1-ranked Bulldogs (4-0, 0-0) will begin GLIAC play against the Lakers (1-2, 0-0 in GLIAC). When these two last faced off in the 2024 season, the Bulldogs took down the Lakers handily by a score of 55-13.

This game saw former Bulldog quarterback Trinidad Chambliss complete 18 of 30 passes for 224 yards and three touchdowns, while adding 43 yards on the ground and scoring another

touchdown. The current senior defensive back, Jalen Jones, had three tackles and an interception in last year's matchup.

This season, the Bulldogs have the highest scoring offense in all of Division II, averaging 53.5 points per game, led by redshirt freshman quarterback Wyatt Bower. On the season, Bower has 688 passing yards with six touchdowns, while adding 353 yards on the ground and five touchdowns.

Bower spoke about his performance thus far in his first season.

"I am okay with my performance so far this season," Bower said. "I need to still work on everything that goes

into the games and prep. I have a long way to go to being happy with my play."

On defense, one of the standouts this season has been sophomore defensive back Ahlston Ware, who has 23 total tackles, four pass breakups and an interception in the 76-0 victory against Rio Grande.

Junior slot receiver Taariik Brett believes the team can keep firing on all cylinders as it heads into conference play.

"I absolutely believe we will keep things rolling and keep continuing to better ourselves," Brett said. "Especially as we start GLIAC play. The team is fired up to get back out there after the bye week and compete."

In prior seasons, coming off a bye week has usually been a great thing for the team. In the last four seasons, the Bulldogs have won every post-bye week game by a large margin. In the 2021 season, they shut out Davenport 38-0; in 2022, they defeated Waldorf University 69-3; in 2023, they took down Northern Michigan 78-3; and last season, they set a school record with an 84-7 win over American International.

Sophomore quarterback Chase Carter is happy with how his team has performed this season, but knows there are still many games to be played.

"We're undefeated and for the most part we're healthy,"

Carter said. "So I am very happy with how the team is progressing so far but we still have a long way to go. We know the expectations placed upon us and we know we have to continue to attack each day as we still have much more to prove."

The Lakers are led on offense by senior quarterback Zach Zella, who has performed quite well despite his team's record, passing for 815 yards and eight touchdowns. His leading receiver is senior Norion Espadron, who has 212 yards and one touchdown.

On defense, the Lakers have struggled quite a bit, as they have allowed 33 points per game and 428 yards

per game. In comparison, the Bulldogs have allowed 14.25 points per game and only 249 yards of offense per game.

Roosevelt is led on defense by senior defensive back Kamal Mukarram, who has 30 total tackles on the season, which is good for the top 20 in Division II, with one tackle for loss, one pass breakup and one forced fumble.

The Bulldogs travel to Morris Field in Chicago on Saturday, Oct. 4 at 2 p.m. to take on the Roosevelt Lakers.

Ferris hockey starts new year

Bulldogs take on RedHawks in season opener



Photo courtesy of the Torch Archives

Junior forward Emerson Goode maneuvers the puck down the ice in the 2024-25 season opener against Miami of Ohio.

Devin Wardrop
Sports Reporter

The Ferris State Bulldogs (0-0-0,0-0-0 in CCHA) will head to the Miami (OH) RedHawks (0-0-0, 0-0-0 in NCHC) to start the 2025-26 season.

Coming off a year where the Bulldogs went 13-20-3 and 12-12-1 in the conference en route to losing in the CCHA Mason Cup quarterfinals to the St. Thomas Tommies, Ferris is looking forward to the new season.

The team has undergone significant changes since the quarterfinals games, including the hiring of former Long Island head coach Brett Riley. Riley is excited for the

first games to show what the team has been working on.

“We’re all very excited to get the season started,” Riley said. “Opening against Miami gives us a great opportunity to see our group compete and put into action. I’m proud of how quickly the players have embraced the new systems and identity. These first two games will be an important step in setting the tone for the year, but also trying new things to help get organized for CCHA play.”

Last season, the Red Hawks went 3-28-3 overall and 0-23-1 in conference play. Ferris State and Miami have opened the season against each other every year since the 2021-22 season.

Since then, Ferris State is 3-2-3 in the series, with many games going into overtime and three going into shootouts. Each year, the games have been within only a goal or two. Last season, both games ended in a tie as they went to an overtime shootout, which Ferris won both times.

Those were two of the three overtime shootout games the Bulldogs had last season. The third game was the last game of the regular season, losing at home to Northern Michigan 4-4.

Ferris State sophomore forward Jack Silich talked about the keys for his team to beat the Red Hawks in regulation and get the extra

points that the team needs over the course of the season.

“For us, we need to continue to play how we usually play, which is hard and heavy,” Silich said. “We need to use that to our advantage. I think we’re an older team, and we can definitely take it to them in that sense. They’re definitely a younger team compared to us, and we just need to use our maturity to play the way we want to.”

Last season for the Bulldogs, Silich played in 20 games and logged 6 points (3-3-6) on 43 shots.

The Bulldogs have had roster changes since the end of last season as well, losing

three players in the transfer portal and four more Bulldogs who went pro, including goaltender Noah West, who started 34 of the 35 games he played in and had a .901 save percentage. West signed with the Kansas City Mavericks, the affiliate of the Seattle Kraken.

Ferris State also added 12 players to the roster from the transfer portal, with five players following Riley from Long Island. One player who didn’t come from Long Island was North Dakota transfer, goaltender Hobie Hedquist. Last season for the Fighting Hawks, Hedquist started eight of the ten games he played in, playing for 513 minutes with a .894

save percentage. Hedquist went 3-4-1 in the games he played in.

The junior netminder is looking forward to the series against the Red Hawks, as well as the season ahead.

“I couldn’t be more excited for this weekend coming up,” Hedquist said. “I feel that we have a really close group this season and can accomplish great things together. We couldn’t be more excited to start our season.”

Ferris State will open its season on the road at Miami (OH) on Friday, Oct. 3, at 7:05 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 4, at 6:05 p.m. Both games will be held at the Goggin Ice Center in Oxford, Ohio.