



# The Ferris State Torch

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Big Rapids, Michigan

Week of March 25, - April 1, 2026

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## Ferris ranks top 20 nationally for exam pass rates

### Ferris College of Pharmacy achieves a 94% exam pass rate



Photo courtesy of Ferris State University

The college of pharmacy at Ferris prides itself on being able to educate their students and provide hands on experience tailored towards their careers.

**Davaria Pharr**  
News Reporter

Ferris State University College of Pharmacy class of 2025 has been ranked in the top 20 nationally with a 94% pass rate for its license exams.

The College of Health Professions has been ranked nationally since 2025. The college prides itself on its commitment and dedication to the students.

Dean and Professor of the College of Pharmacy, Stephen Durst, is grateful for the support that has gotten the program so far.

“Our commitment is graduating, educating and training our graduates. Whether that’s in community pharmacy, hospital or other practice areas, we’ve had that commitment

since 1893,” Durst said.

He explains that he works hard every day to maintain the college’s standards, but it wouldn’t be possible without the faculty, students, and alumni.

“We all come together to make it happen,” Durst said.

He mentioned that the commitment to the students is what distinguishes the program from others.

In order to achieve a top ranking, many factors come into play.

“Our passing rate dropped to around average, and that’s not good enough for us,” Durst said. “So students and faculty added extra material and additional studies. We did more assessments of the students to help them retain information and be better prepared.”

Durst mentioned that the success stems not just from exam scores, but also from students wanting to do well, not just on the board exam but throughout their professional careers. Durst described how there are many resources available to help students. Including the office of student success and extensive preparation for the North American Pharmacy Licensure Exam. The exam is similar to the Board Exam and offers early exposure and practice. Allowing students to gain an understanding of where they need to concentrate their studies.

In addition to this, the faculty put together review sessions for students, ensuring readiness for their exam.

But students aren’t just making strides in the class-

room, as they are making their mark in the real world as well.

“The college has always been recognized for well-prepared graduates. We hear a lot from employers. The comments I receive are consistently the same,” Durst said. “When a Ferris graduate is assigned to their clinical experience, the level of preparedness is noticeably different from other institutions.”

He said that Alumni are very interactive with students even after graduation. Those connections and partnerships help students with internships and networking.

It isn’t just the faculty that enjoy their time in the program, but students as well.

Dental hygiene freshman Aylssa Mason made her de-

cision after hearing about the program at Ferris.

“It’s pretty cool to know we have a good health care program and reputation,” Mason said. “I feel I have gotten a really good education here.”

Her friend, who is also in the Dental hygiene program, Jillian Schram, attended for similar reasons.

“I live three hours away. I applied because when you look up the best dental hygiene schools in Michigan Ferris comes up at the top,” Schram said.

She explains that she has learned a lot at Ferris, especially when she did her job shadowing.

“I felt well prepared and understood a lot of stuff they told me. It was really fun. I job-shadowed before going into the program, and now

that I am in it, I actually understand what I am doing,” Schram said. “I wanted to do health care, but I used to be afraid of the dentist. Then I switched to a different hygienist who actually took the time to explain things to me and educate me.”

She explains that she wants to help others who may be afraid of their fears and overcome some of that anxiety. She mentions patient education is very important and is currently lacking in healthcare.

Those interested can look at Ferris360 and Contact Stephen Durst, the head of the program. The pharmacy building also offers twice-a-year cleaning, available to all students.

## Womens History Month

For this Womens History Month the torch has set aside three pages from our Womens History Month Special Edition. Featuring guest pieces by Ferris Faculty and by women working at the Ferris State Torch. Read more about the struggles of Black women, the difficulties that women face when it comes to health care and the harsh realities of beauty standards. **PAGES 7 - 9.**

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# News

Harmony Goodman | Interim News Editor | goodmah2@ferris.edu

## Michigan

Nolan Matthews  
Sports Editor

Statewide- Gas prices in Michigan have surged 33 cents a gallon in the past week, and prices now sit at their highest point in more than two years, AAA-The Auto Club Group announced on Monday. The average price of gas in the state sits at \$3.92 a gallon, which is the highest since August of 2023, but it is still slightly lower than the national average of \$3.96. President Donald Trump announced on Monday that he is delaying attacks on Iran's electric power infrastructure, while going into negotiations may cool the rise in oil and gas prices, one analyst said.

## National

Nolan Matthews  
Sports Editor

New York City, New York- An Air Canada jet that was carrying more than 70 passengers collided with a fire truck while landing at New York's LaGuardia Airport late Sunday. This accident killed both the pilot and copilot, while injuring several others, officials said. The fire truck was crossing the tarmac after being given permission to check on another plane reporting an odor onboard. Before the collision, an air traffic controller can be heard on airport communications frantically telling the fire truck to stop, and roughly 20 minutes later, the controller appears to blame himself. Being quoted as saying "We were dealing with an emergency earlier," the controller said. "I messed up."

## Global

Nolan Matthews  
Sports Editor

London, England- Four ambulances belonging to a Jewish charity were set on fire early Monday morning in what British police are investigating as an anti-Semitic hate crime. While it has not been classified as a terrorist incident, counterterrorism officials have been put in charge of the investigation. No one was injured in the nighttime attack, which shattered windows in nearby homes and left the ambulances as charred shells. Prime Minister Keir Starmer called the attack "horrific" and said, "Antisemitism has no place in our society, and it's really important that we all stand together at a moment like this," Starmer said.

## "Bowldogs" bowling for good

Wacky Bowling Fundraiser brings community together for special Olympics



Photo courtesy of Special Olympics Michigan Area 5

Locals and students gather at the Big Rapids Bowling Center for the Wacky Bowling fundraiser.

Gannon Thomas  
News Reporter

Community members, Special Olympics athletes and Ferris students came together on Sunday, March 22, for a night of fun and fundraising as Special Olympics Michigan hosted its Wacky Bowling fundraiser.

This event was designed to bring the community together for a night of fun and support for the local athletes. Participants played in a three-game bowling tournament with unique "wacky" rules to enhance both the players' and spectators' experience. Teams were made up of local community members, Special Olympics athletes and members of the Ferris bowling club.

Director of Special Olympics Michigan, Jennifer Knowles, said events like wacky bowling are essential for funding our local Special Olympics teams and athletes.

"Fundraisers like this help to provide year-round sports for our athletes. These pro-

vide funds for transportation, meals, lodging, equipment, uniforms and practice venues," Knowles said.

Special Olympics Michigan relies on fundraising and events like this to ensure its programs remain accessible. The program relies on community support to thrive. This event won't only raise money for the Special Olympics but also build connections with athletes and the community.

"We are part of this community, and we have great support from everyone," Knowles said. "But we don't have as much community integration as I would like to see. It's one thing to donate money, but time is even more precious to us."

Members of the Ferris Bowling Club, unofficially named the Bowldogs, played a major role alongside Michigan Special Olympics in orchestrating the event. Members of the club helped plan the tournament structure and ensured the event ran smoothly.

Ferris Bowling Club trea-

surer, Tyler Pierce, explained where the "wacky" in Wacky Bowling comes from.

"In a typical bowling night, you would simply go with a group of friends, hang out and throw some bowling balls," Pierce said. "In our 'wacky' event, we are creating a tournament-style event that will be over the period of four hours. We bowl three games of bowling with periodic trick shot competitions. While bowling their three games, we will ask people to periodically stop and do one of our wacky challenges."

Fun wasn't the only goal of the night; building relationships and making friends, bowlers from the community were placed on teams alongside athletes from the Special Olympics team.

Another member of the Ferris Bowling club, Grant Gross, who helped plan the event and served as the tournament's director, said the event wasn't just about competition but connection.

"We are trying to get the community more involved in

both organizations," Gross said, "So the best way we thought was having community members bowl on the same team with members of the Special Olympics and Bowldogs."

This event seeks to connect community members and build bonds that last past the bowling lanes.

"Between throws, you can meet new people. Bowling is a very social sport," Gross said.

While the event did have some competitive elements, the main goal was to have fun and raise money for a good cause.

In addition to the tournament, participants were also invited to participate in other games and challenges alongside the tournament, as well as a silent auction. These activities allowed attendees to contribute in multiple ways while staying entertained throughout the day.

CONT. ON PG. 3



Photos courtesy of Special Olympics Michigan Area 5

**Bowling teams celebrate their final scores after a day of hitting the lanes.**

**BOWLING FOR GOOD CONT.**

In addition to the tournament, participants were also invited to participate in other games and challenges alongside the tournament, as well as a silent auction. These ac-

tivities allowed attendees to contribute in multiple ways while staying entertained throughout the day.

The event saw strong community support. Participants came together to not only raise money but to show their support for the athletes of the

Michigan Special Olympics. Teammates talked between games and built connections that will last a lifetime.

As the final pins were knocked down, the connections the players made remained standing. Through laughter, teamwork and an

overall good time, wacky bowling showed that the greatest impact was not the funds raised, but the friends made.

Events like this continue to play a vital role in supporting Special Olympics athletes while strengthening the bond

between them and the community that they represent.

For more information on how you can support your local Special Olympics athletes or volunteer for future events, call the Special Olympics of Michigan Area Five at (231)-287-2403 or email them at

area05@somi.org. For more information on the Ferris Bowling Team, contact Tyler Pierce at piercet8@ferris.edu.

# WANTED

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Ferris State Torch

**2026 - 2027 SCHOOL YEAR:**

We are seeking an organized student (enrolled in at least six credit hours) for the Editor-in-Chief position during the 2026 - 27 school year. Candidates must write well, possess excellent leadership skills and be prepared to work the entire school year. Candidates should be familiar with basic journalistic principles, as well as printed and digital publishing techniques. Qualified students can receive competitive wages for up to 20 hours per week. Ability to work and train in April and August of 2026 is necessary. Prior journalism experience or training required.

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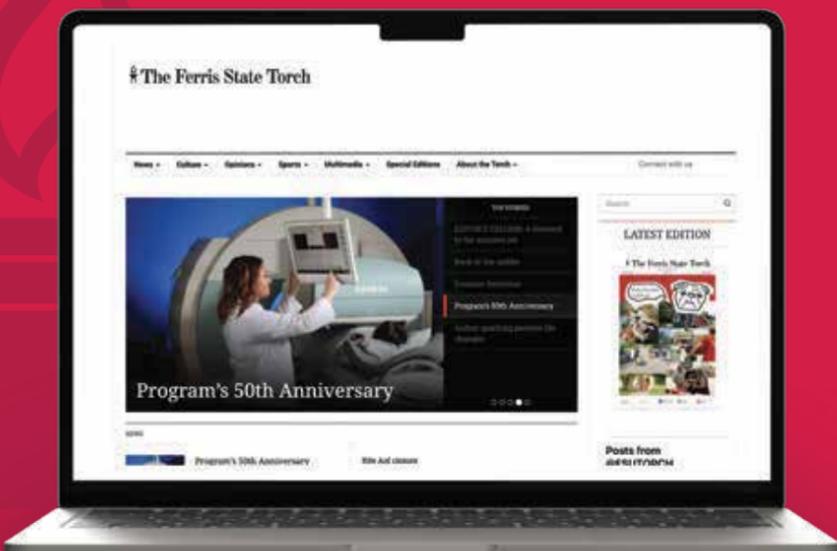
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  - >> What should be the goals of a student-run newspaper?
  - >> How will I, as Editor-in-Chief, ensure that the newspaper reaches its goals?
- Copies of articles or other written work
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# Culture

Grace Heethuis | Culture Editor | turnek29@ferris.edu

## Literature in person returns

Author Colleen Alles visits Ferris to share her work



Photo courtesy of Colleen Alles

Colleen Alles is best known for her work as a librarian, a writer and her collection of novels and poetry.

**Grace Heethuis**  
Culture Editor

On March 18, the spring Literature in Person event was held in the Ferris Fine Art Gallery, featuring award-winning author Colleen Alles.

Allles has published numerous books, including three novels and two poetry collections. In 2025, she published her debut short fiction collection, "Close to a Flame," which was a finalist for the National Indie Excellence Award.

Throughout the event, Alles read a variety of published pieces, including "Cusping" from "Close to a Flame." Additionally, she read several poems featuring her children, who she mentioned often show up in her writing, sometimes unintentionally.

Allles reflected on her process of writing the short fic-

tion collection she read from, as well as its themes.

"The short story collection 'Close to a Flame' took me 20-plus years to put together," Alles said. "The first short story I wrote in college as an undergrad, and then from there I just kept coming back to themes around friendship, themes around relationships."

Often, Alles writes about experiences with her children and being a mother. She read two poems about her children— one about her daughter and one about her son. Additionally, she talked about being a young mother and writer many years ago when her children were little.

"I wrote a lot of those short stories when my two kids were young, so I was adjusting to new motherhood, being home a lot more, and trying to write and revise during

nap time, which is good for a short story if it's only 3,000 words," Alles said.

Motherhood is a major theme throughout a lot of her writing, especially relating to the anxiety she has experienced being a mother.

"I think motherhood comes up a lot, and specifically anxiety and motherhood," Alles said. "I think the poems and the short fiction carry this hypervigilance of worry over what might happen, given that we live in times that feel kind of dark and scary, but the work is always trying to, at the same time, be positive and lean toward the light."

While themes of motherhood crop up frequently, dark humor also often manifests in her work, which many attendees enjoyed about the reading.

Literature in Person coordinator, author and professor

Deirdre Fagan talked about what she enjoyed about hearing Alles read her work.

"I love the dark humor and the work that Colleen read," Fagan said. "It was fabulous, and I love her ability to get into the voice of the teenagers and the fiction."

For every Literature in Person event, Fagan decides which author to bring in, often considering the material she is currently teaching students, as she invites the speaker to talk to her students during class time as well.

Fagan mentioned how she met Alles and why she decided to invite her to share her work at this spring's Literature in Person event.

"We met at a conference, and I became aware of her work," Fagan said. "I'm teaching advanced creative writing right now, where students

choose the genre that they want to work on, and she's a multi-genre author, so she 100% fit the needs of that classroom."

About a dozen people attended the event in person, and many more attended the Zoom livestream. Many audience members inquired about her work and discussed what they appreciated in Alles's writing.

Integrative studies senior Brianna Bentley was one in person attendee who talked about what she enjoyed about the event.

"[I liked] just learning more about a different author's perspective, especially a Michigan author. So I love hearing about writers from my area," Bentley said.

Additionally, Bentley talked about her unique appreciation for Alles's work as a creative writer herself.

"I just love seeing the different types of authors that get to come through and everything, but I'm also a creative writer, so I love learning more about the process and their experiences and stuff like that."

Finally, Bentley talked about what is relatable about Alles' writing, specifically surrounding being a parent.

"Weirdly enough, I'm not a parent, but I am an aunt, and I have just noticed a lot in my writing that they have popped up, just the love you have for the kids in your life and everything," Bentley said. "I love hearing parents when they put their kids into their artwork."

For more information about previous Literature in Person events, visit Ferris' Literature in Person website or contact the event's coordinator, Deirdre Fagan.

# Crimson Clash VII brings hundreds of students to Ferris

## Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournament hosted at CVL



Photo by: Blase Gapinski | Editor in Chief

Over 150 participants and spectators filled the Center for Virtual Learning for the seventh iteration of the Crimson Clash tournament.

**Blase Gapinski**  
Editor in Chief

On March 21, the seventh rendition of the Crimson Clash tournament was hosted by the Ferris State Smash team, bringing hundreds of high school and college students to the Center for Virtual Learning.

Each year, this competition brings together some of the best Super Smash Bros. Ultimate players at the high school and collegiate level. The all-day event featured five Super Smash Bros. Ultimate events, one of which was a partnered-based doubles tournament and it also included two single events featuring Street Fighter 6 and Super Smash Bros. Brawl.

The entry fee was \$5 for all events. The money all went into the larger pot and with over 150 competitors registered and a \$250 pot bonus included, the total was close to \$1,000. The top eight competitors split the combined pot, with first place taking home the largest share.

The high schoolers kicked things off with their dedicated singles bracket beginning at 9:30 a.m. Competitors traveled from all over to make the tournament, featuring esports athletes from Davenport University, Michigan State University, Grand Valley State University, Sag-

inaw Valley State University and Northwestern Michigan College. Each event was open entry as well, so anyone willing to pay the entry fee had the opportunity to compete.

The competitions that received the most attention were the Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Squad Strike event and four singles pools of single tournaments, with Squad Strike taking place at noon and the Ultimate pools kicking off at 2 p.m.

Varsity esports captain Nathan Biggs highlighted the annual competition and why it is beneficial to the broader campus. He mentioned that bringing these high schools and other universities to the campus continues to put Ferris' name out there and show the mid-Michigan community the vast resources the school has to offer.

"We have eight commentators this time who are all from different regions of Michigan and they come in here and they commentate the game," Biggs said. "It's nice to have that overlap of people that normally you wouldn't see in the same scene. Even having the younger people who are getting in and coming to Ferris to play some Smash Ultimate [Super Smash Bros. Ultimate], see the campus and I think it's pretty good for the administration in that

way too."

The \$5 venue fee competitors pay goes entirely to the club at Ferris. This helps the event run and allows them to pay their commentators and production team. Overall, it is a net even event for the esports team.

Biggs spoke on the level of competition that is brought out for the tournament. Numerous competitors are currently ranked in the top 15 in the state of Michigan, and the number one and two-ranked players were also in attendance.

"It's just really nice to see this esports space get used to its full potential and have so many people here who are enthusiastic about this game that has been out for nine years," Biggs said. "In the modern scale of esports, there aren't as many local area network tournaments, and I've played a little bit competitively in some other Esports, and it's really nice to be able to see your competitor next to you. Smash builds community like nothing else because it is a grassroots scene. It isn't funded by any corporation, it's just all of us going to an event for the game we love."

Esports Coordinator Justin Summe guides the entirety of the esports program at Ferris. He manages and helps set up events like the Crimson Clash, while also

working on the production behind the scenes. Another thing he does is visit high schools to recruit students to partake in esports at Ferris.

"Generally, we have a lot of events going on here. So far this semester, we have had around five big ones," Summe said. "So much goes into coordinating the teams, the equipment and the logistics in terms of planning and getting everyone here."

Summe, who has been at Ferris for about a year, explained how much time and effort the students have put into making sure the event is successful. The Smash team works closely with him to share their vision for the event, and he is there to help guide them and execute the plan.

He mentioned the importance of esports and how it brings the community together in a way that people typically wouldn't associate with

video games.

"Playing online is great. Having video games as a competitive outlet is great, but when you are in person, it changes the entire field of the community side of things," Summe said. "It is super important for socialization, and at times, video games can be somewhat isolating, but when you come to something like this, and you see 150 to 200 people all together, celebrating the same thing, hanging out, exchanging ideas, and generally sharing their hobby, it becomes very apparent what the value of esports is."

Senior in digital animation and game design, Nicholas Tidwell, explained how big this event actually is for the esports community here at Ferris. It is the largest event that the Smash team has hosted for the Northern Michigan region since 2019.

"By having this really big

tournament in this region, it'll not only encourage more tournament hosts to make big tournaments, but also will encourage other people to go to those big tournaments," Tidwell said. "Overall, I think, very good for the community and just overall very good for our region."

Ferris State University will host the Collegiate Fighting Games Conference national tournament on April 17-19, bringing top collegiate competitors together for titles including Street Fighter, Tekken, 2XKO, Guilty Gear and other traditional fighting games. The community can expect a high-production, in-person esports experience featuring live broadcasts, professional streaming setups and a vibrant, social atmosphere where students and visitors can connect around their shared passion for competitive gaming.

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# Break time and binging

Students share what they watch when they need a break



Photo by: Connor Grypma | Torch Alumnus

Students unwind with some of their favorite movies, television shows and other forms of visual media to escape from the busyness of college.

**Tate Zellman**  
Culture Reporter

With so much homework on their hands, students turn to movies, TV shows and online programs to give themselves entertainment and ways to ease their stress.

With exposure to technology and various online platforms, students have many opportunities to find something to watch. Watching movies and shows may not be just because of technological access, but also because students need to shift their minds away from college work. Shows and programs can allow students to dive into another world for

entertainment and in times of need.

Many students tend to watch TV shows when they want to put something on. It can be a place they can come to for a break from work or to wind down for the day.

Economics and business administration junior Isa Setles is currently enjoying watching multiple shows.

"I have three main shows in my rotation right now," Setles said. "I'm watching Bob's Burgers, New Girl and Abbott Elementary."

Setles talked about the importance of watching these shows amid her schoolwork.

"For me, it's almost like an escape in a way," Setles

said. "I can just relax, and I don't have to worry about my schoolwork. I can focus on the show and not have to worry about the workload that I have. These shows give me a break from everything else that's going on."

Not every student turns to a TV show when they need something to watch. Some students, whether or not they play sports, enjoy watching sports programs and tournaments.

Mechanical engineering technology freshman Xavier Stroud is currently watching March Madness. Having been exposed to sports at a young age, Stroud is happy to be watching March Madness

for another year.

"I've always liked watching basketball growing up," Stroud said. I started watching the Pistons when I was eight years old. Basketball is one of those sports you can just turn on and just enjoy."

Some students pick shows because of how funny they are, while others select shows for their intriguing ability to tell a good story.

The most recent show for Business sophomore Tyler Frederick was one he chose because he wanted to watch a good story unfold.

"The latest show I watched was Stranger Things," Frederick said. "I enjoy watching shows that have a good

storyline and shows that are interesting, and that's what Stranger Things does. You never know what's going to happen next and I enjoy watching it for that reason."

Many shows, due to their common themes, messages and popularity, are watched by many students.

Social work freshman Dakota Rawe is also watching Bob's Burgers. Rawe talked about how she discovered the show and how that discovery has made it her go-to.

"I would see clips of Bob's Burgers on TikTok," Rawe said. "After seeing some clips, I found it quite funny, and then I started watching it. I thought if it was funny

on TikTok, it's probably funny enough to commit to and watch it, so I've been watching the show ever since."

Regardless of what you watch, having something to watch for the laughs and entertainment, or to ease the stress, can be a great part of your college experience. If you haven't found a show yet, try venturing out and discovering some on the available streaming platforms. Even if you don't watch a show, finding something via YouTube or other social media is always helpful.

# Women's History Month

Jackie Moglia | Opinions Editor | mogliaj@ferris.edu

## When mothers carry the world

The expectations of modern mothers are insane



Photo courtesy of Grace Heethuis

**Grace Heethuis**  
Culture Editor

Mothers in the modern world are expected to carry way too much, as there is this pressure on women to be great at everything they do, especially once they become mothers.

This is a burden I am becoming all too familiar with. There is an expectation that you should go from what, for most women, is the biggest change of their lives, back to normal in a matter of months.

Just a month after my son was born, I had to go back to work. This had nothing to

do with my employers. They would have given me as much time as I needed. It's simply not possible anymore to live on and especially raise a family on one income.

This is just one part of the burden women are forced to bear. If we were provided with adequate maternity leave, women wouldn't be forced to make nearly impossible choices when it comes to their children.

Additionally, social media plays a huge role in this expectation. There is a silent competition between women, oftentimes, even if it's accidental. I believe that a lot of times, women are simply trying to make it look like they are doing enough. I've felt the pressure as well, but I almost never post on social media about what is going on in my life anymore, aside from the occasional cute photos of my baby. There is too much pressure to do everything.

Last semester, I finished classes while working two jobs, caring for a newborn,

managing a household and navigating the biggest change of my life. Even with the help of friends and family, it was exhausting. That's the reality of a lot of new moms and some don't have any help at all.

There is a societal expectation that women should be able to handle everything. Many years ago, when it was possible to live on one income, men often went to work while women stayed home to care for the children and maintain the house.

Today, there are many more women in the workforce, but they're still expected to keep up with the same responsibilities at home. Women often have the responsibility of working, handling all of the cleaning and everything to do with the children as well.

Functioning on very little sleep makes the problem that much more intense. It is exhausting, to say the least. Despite how tiring it is, I love my life. I wouldn't trade my

family for the world. However, sometimes I wish it were a bit easier.

This might sound ridiculous to some people, but being a mom is super easy. It's everything else that's hard. My son is the light of my life. If I could spend every day playing with him and caring for him without having to worry about literally anything else, it wouldn't feel so exhausting.

Obviously, that is unrealistic. There will always be other responsibilities. From maintaining a social life to taking care of our home, I will always stay busy. That's not the point, though. Even if one less responsibility fell on my shoulders, it would really lighten the load.

The hardest part is, this isn't a reflection of me not doing enough, or even anyone around me. This is a systemic issue. We need better maternity leave if we are going to raise happy, healthy families that have happy, healthy mothers.

I think that there is something that we can do immediately and daily, though. We can refuse to stop playing into the idea that women should be doing everything. It is wonderful to be proud of your accomplishments and want to share them with the world. However, I think it is important to be mindful of when it starts to feel like a competition.

That said, motherhood is the most transformative and joyful experience I have had. Some days are beyond exhausting, but watching my son grow and change constantly and seeing my husband be such an amazing dad brings me so much joy.

If you are in the same position someday where it feels like way too much is falling on your shoulders, take a deep breath and remember that you are doing enough. You're not failing, and you're not lazy. You're living somewhere where the system actively works against you.

## More than a slogan

A reflection on women in sport

**Dr. Jen Coburn**  
Guest Contributor

"Pay Us What You Owe Us" is not just a slogan created by WNBA players in their quest for pay parity in women's professional sports, but is reflective of a sentiment echoed by women throughout all facets of the sporting industry.

Whether you are a player or coach, front office administrator or sideline journalist, the issues facing Women in sports often revolve around the construction of worth and are not just measured in the form of the almighty dollar.

Over Spring Break, I attended two back-to-back conferences in Dublin, Ireland, where I presented academic papers on both NIL and the discrimination athletes face on social media. At both the Sport and Discrimination Conference and the IACS Summit, there was no shortage of presentations and discussions regarding the reality that confronts women at all levels of sport.

As a life-long athlete, I often wish that our beliefs around the purity of sport, that it can somehow escape the ills of society and teach us how to come together in

competition, hold true. But I also know that sports cannot escape the culture and society in which it is played, and each panelist presented clear and convincing evidence to that end.

Whether it's the type of questions asked to professional women footballers in Spain and England (usually relational rather than tactical), fan comments on rugby commentators in Ireland ("what would she know about it anyway?") or that female college athletes in the US face an overall higher rate of sexual violence than their male counterparts, the playing field is not equal and is riddled with the very same 'isms' found within our society and culture.

A pay gap in society translates to a pay gap in sports. Harmful stereotypes that usurp credibility in society translate to sports. Violence and abuse in society translate to sports.

We often hear that acknowledgment is the first step in dealing with a problem, so perhaps the WNBA's slogan can be a step in acknowledging that the construction of worth looks differently for women in sports.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

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# Who gains when we shrink?

## Plastic surgery, perfection and profit



Photo courtesy of Jessica Oakes

Jessica Oakes  
Torch Alumna

The greatest compliment I get is that I am just like my mom. She is smart, selfless, hilarious, gorgeous, strong and she hates every photo that has ever been taken of her.

Of course, it is awful for anyone to feel that way, especially surprising for a woman who has been compared to Barbie as much as my mom has, but just look around.

My mom graduated from high school in 1981. She probably only has yearbook and prom photos from her teen years. I was born in 2002 and my phone is embarrassingly full of pictures of me, as if I might forget how

asymmetrical my face is or how flat my chest is without weekly proof.

Why do I feel the need to document those things? Maybe because I can hardly go a few hours without a commercial telling us to reach self-actualization with Botox, or suggesting that weight loss injections could help us love ourselves again.

Sometimes I want to believe that it is great for women to be able to choose what they want to look like and how they come into that image. I also want to keep in mind that so many differences between men and women are manufactured, remembering that any kind of person can struggle with body image. In the 2020s,

the numbers regarding cosmetic enhancements do not comfort me.

Carolina Cosmetic Surgery statistics state that women made up 83.9% of worldwide plastic surgery patients in 2024. Simultaneously, women made up only 19% of membership in the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

According to FAIR Health, women have been prescribed GLP-1 peptides such as Ozempic for weight loss at higher rates than men since 2021, now at a rate of 2-to-1. Flip that ratio around, and you have the gender makeup of the executive management team at Novo Nordisk, the pharmaceutical company that owns both Ozempic and Wegovy.

Just like in the makeup and anti-aging skincare industries, I see a small group of men whose salaries are secured by the endless stream of things women should hate about themselves.

Maybe the biggest culture shock of living in Tampa, Florida, after 21 years in rural Michigan is the beauty standard. This is one of the nation's top ten cities for plastic surgery, according to 10TampaBay, and it contains the highest concentration of matching athleisure sets, according to the view from my window.

There is a sea of spreadsheets and six-packs outside my door. It is 80 degrees. Most people I know have access to a pool or can easily drive to one of the best beaches in the country. We are also spiritually upwind from Miami, which is clearer

every day. All this to say that people here really care about what shape and size they are, from the gap in their thighs to the bridge of their nose.

I may live in a hotspot, but this is not exclusive to high earners in trendy coastal cities. Even in Big Rapids, anyone could drive downtown to Embry & Co. for soft tissue filler, Botox, or a consultation for prescription Zepbound injections.

For the record, these cosmetic enhancements are in no way as invasive as plastic surgery procedures. I have no judgment for the women who do partake or the female owners of a seemingly successful small business. Still, the fact that there is a market for this in a college town on the Muskegon River is a huge sign of the times for me—like seeing a residence hall on Top Taggart Field.

Dr. Rady Rahban, a board-certified plastic surgeon in Beverly Hills, described some of his observations on an episode of The Psychology of your 20s.

"More than ever before, younger and more patients are coming in to get surgery. Why is that? Social media. The end," Dr. Rahban said.

He explained that the specific requests made by young patients are changing, and referred to several anti-aging and body recomposition procedures.

"We've always had younger people having surgery... It wasn't crazy to get a nose job, but this idea of Bella Hadid's cat eyes, lip lifts, mini-facelifts, BBLs, lipo, fat transfer, rib remodeling.

There are some crazy things getting done, and they are getting done younger and younger."

We have every right to change our bodies with braces, hair removal, makeup, weightlifting, or even surgery. My teeth did not grow in straight and I would not stand for that any longer once I got to high school. But when I see celebrities shrinking and picture how flat my own stomach is in my tight shirts, I have to ask who I want to make myself smaller for. I did not learn about protein ratios and progressive overload in the gym just to be weak. The girlboss commercials will not tell you this, but the National Institutes of Health reports that "in some studies, reductions in lean mass range between 40% and 60% as a proportion of total weight lost" on GLP-1s.

Lean mass is not the pouch of fat that nearly all women have below their belly button. It is not our double chin when we look down at our phones. It is the muscle we will need to stay mobile and healthy when we are 70 years old and risk death in any fall.

The celebrities we want to look like now looked entirely different one year ago. Different body parts and proportions were trendy 10 years ago. I have no idea what will be expected of us tomorrow, but I will never allow pharmaceutical giants and marketing teams to convince me that my squinty eyes, downturned nose, sharp jaw, A-cups, or stretchmarks are anything they need to fix for me.

# More answers, less hormones

## It's time for health professionals to start actually listening to women

Harmony Goodman  
Production Manager

Imagine this: you just turned 18 and it's your first year at college. You are away from home and your family for the very first time. It's wonderful and freeing, isn't it?

Until it's not, trust me, I felt the same way at first. Everything was fine one moment and the next, I was experiencing intense and heavy vaginal bleeding. Originally, I just thought it was an irregular period. I decided to visit the doctor when it had been over a month of continuous heavy bleeding.

So there I was, at the doctor's, scared and confused. The only explanation they could offer was that sometimes Nexplanon (a rod implant form of birth control)

just does that. Their only solution? They told me I could take birth control pills alongside my Nexplanon to maybe control the bleeding. Which was basically their way of saying, "We don't know, but here's some more hormones."

I left with more questions than answers; they never ran any tests or checked up on me with any sort of equipment. The charge was over \$200. \$200 for them to tell me they didn't know, offer the pill on top of my other birth control and send me home. The bleeding continued for three months.

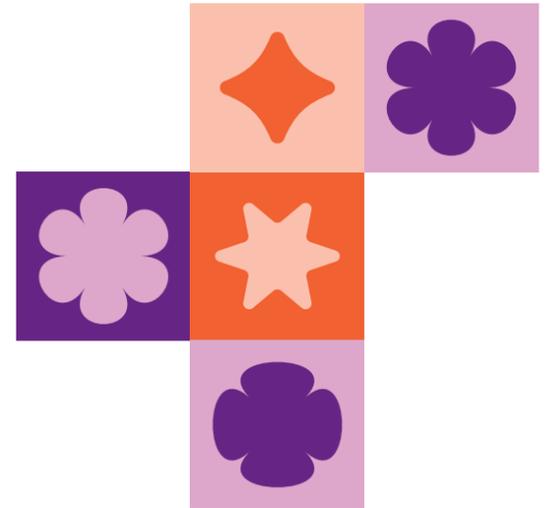
I had a similar experience this past summer when I visited urgent care and the emergency room. I walked in and told them I was experiencing abnormal bleeding. The first thing they made me do at the

urgent care was take a pregnancy test. While I waited for the results, the male physician I was seeing felt around my stomach, trying to identify any sort of pain.

His hands were cold. I was anxious about so many things, not just pregnancy. It was with his hands still on my stomach that he told me that I was making him miss his OBGYN days.

Now I can't imagine in what world he would've thought that, that was the best thing to say. I was a scared 20-year-old, bleeding, in pain and anxiously waiting for results.

CONT. ON PG. 8



Graphic by Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**MORE ANSWERS LESS HORMONES CONT.**

I wasn't pregnant, and they had no idea what was wrong. The only test they ran was a pregnancy test and a physical; they sent me to the local emergency room instead.

So I walked for almost an hour to reach the emergency room, still bleeding, still in pain and still having no idea what was wrong with me.

When I got to emergency care, I was seen very quickly by a nurse who was very nice and understanding. Before she left, she assured me the doctor would be in soon. I ended up waiting over an hour and a half before he came to see me. When the doctor finally did arrive, he didn't bother to ask me anything. He just ordered me a pregnancy test.

It didn't matter that I told

him I just took one at the urgent care. It wasn't until my nurse came back in and explained to him the same thing I had just tried to explain that I had already taken a pregnancy test and I wasn't pregnant, that he listened.

They ran a blood test instead and I waited another hour, where the results gave no answers. They checked me out another hour later, with no answers and told

me to come back if I was still bleeding in two weeks.

It isn't just me; I have heard so many other horror stories from women regarding reproductive health. Especially when it comes to birth control, it just seems that instead of actually looking into women's issues, they would rather prescribe more birth control or insist that the only issue must be that a woman is pregnant.

In a study done by the Victoria State Government in 2024, it was found that one in three women who visited the hospital had felt dismissed by doctors. Young women are being taught how to stand up for themselves regarding their own health issues. While one can argue that's a great skill to learn, I argue that women shouldn't have to feel this way, especially when it comes to their

own health.

The healthcare system is failing women. We are so far behind in treating women's health issues and it's time we stop making excuses.

I promise you, the last thing a woman wants to do is take more hormones and pee in another cup for no answers.

# My experience as a Black woman

## Insight into the struggles Black women face in the workplace



Graphic by Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Davaria Pharr**  
News Reporter

My experience being a young Black woman has been rather hard, if I could describe it in a few words.

My name is Davaria. I'm a sophomore at Ferris State and here's a little look into my life.

Since the beginning of time, Black women have gone unprotected, underrep-

resented, mocked, made fun of and everything in between, especially darker-skinned women.

We are the blueprint for culture itself. Hairstyles, language, slang, clothing and simply the way we carry ourselves.

It seems to me that we can never actually be ourselves without being shamed for it.

What I mean by this is that other races of women can

exhibit certain behaviors and be praised for it.

When Black women exhibit those same behaviors, we are often told we are "ghetto" and undesirable.

There are many examples of this. If a Latina woman curses at someone, she is often seen as attractive and as someone standing up for herself.

If a white woman cries at her job, she may gain sympa-

thy from it and maybe even a week off.

Their voices and concerns are always at the forefront of society's mind. This is not to discredit those races, but simply to give perspective.

Black women do not have the luxury to just be human.

We are expected to always be strong and to take disrespect and name-calling without saying anything.

If we speak on an issue, no

one cares.

If we are harmed in the workplace, no one cares because Black women are one of the most unprotected groups in the United States.

When we are in these spaces and jobs, we just have to keep our heads up, smile and tough it out.

We have to make sure we are always doing things right. In fact, we have to be the best possible because we also don't get recognized for our work or accomplishments.

We don't get picked first for that promotion, no matter how qualified we may be.

But who created those popular slang terms like "period," "sis" and "boo?" Black women.

Who created many of those creative hairstyles? Black women.

Who set the standard for fashion and body figure? Black women.

Yet we are still underpaid, overlooked and told we are undesirable.

Black women also have some of the lowest marriage rates.

We have a target on our back because every day we step into the world, someone is looking for a reason to get us fired or dismiss our voices and we are expected to just deal with it.

A great example of this can

be seen in the movie *Hidden Figures*.

The main character, Katherine Johnson, is a Black woman who works for NASA. She is the smartest employee there.

She works in an all-white environment and has to walk half a mile just to use the bathroom because no "colored" bathrooms are available for her at work.

She is paid little compared to the other employees and nobody wants to talk to her or drink from the same coffee pot.

But she works relentlessly to answer questions that seem impossible to solve and can solve equations without a book. She was the only one able to calculate flight projections for Project Mercury and other missions.

This movie came out in 2016 and although we don't have to use separate bathrooms anymore, things have not drastically changed in the modern workplace.

So next time you see a Black woman in the workplace, be a little kinder now that you know what she may be going through behind closed doors.

Shedding light on what goes unspoken about will hopefully enforce change and community.

# Special qualifications, special responsibilities

## A woman's role in law

**Emily Fransted**  
Guest Contributor

In 1873, Justice Joseph Bradley memorialized his perception of the differences between men and women in a judicial opinion in the case of *Bradwell v Illinois*, 83 US 130 (1873).

Justice Bradley's remarks were part of the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the case involving Myra Bradwell, a woman, who possessed all the necessary credentials and qualifications to become a licensed

attorney. Yet, the state of Illinois refused to grant Mrs. Bradwell's application for a license to become a lawyer.

The single thing that made Mrs. Bradwell ineligible to practice law? Her status as a married woman.

In support of the denial, Justice Bradley noted, "[the] natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life." He went on to say that while he agreed with women's advancement in certain occupations, he could

not condone allowing women to pursue occupations that featured "highly specialized qualifications and demanding special responsibilities."

Law is not for the timid or delicate.

Attorneys are detailed observers and methodical thinkers who deconstruct complex issues into more manageable components. Attorneys are persuasive communicators tasked with building trust and telling stories tailored to specific audiences. Attorneys routinely and carefully balance a myriad of obligations.

They are zealous advocates, while simultaneously honoring their duties of truthfulness and respect to the Court, and serving as ambassadors of the legal system.

The century and a half that has passed since the decision in *Bradwell v Illinois* makes clear that women are exceedingly fit for the important occupation of practicing law. Modernly, women comprise more than 40% of the country's practicing attorneys. Further, women are graduating from law schools

at faster rates than their counterparts.

Were he still alive, Justice Bradley might be shocked to find four women currently serving on the same bench he once looked down from. Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Justice Elena Kagan, Justice Amy Coney Barrett and Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson pursued their own unique academic and professional paths to the United States Supreme Court.

Prior to becoming a judge, each woman earned her license to practice, demon-

strating possession of the specialized qualifications and management of the specialized responsibilities Justice Bradley once believed them incapable of.

Too timid and delicate to practice law? Justice Bradley's misguided sentiment has been emphatically overruled.

# Sports

Nolan Matthews | Sports Editor | matthen4@ferris.edu

## Bulldog softball looks to keep momentum

Softball faces off against Grand Valley and Purdue Northwest



Photo courtesy of Torch Archives

Sophomore Bailey McCallister fields a ground ball against Roosevelt during the 2025 season.

**Nolan Matthews**  
Sports Editor

After sweeping the Wayne State Warriors on Sunday, the Ferris State softball team will travel south to face the Grand Valley State Lakers and the Purdue Northwest Pride.

The Bulldogs took down the Warriors by scores of 9-3 and 8-1. Junior outfielder Emma Gillard stepped up in game one, going 2-2, hitting two two-run home runs in the game and adding a walk. While in the second game, freshman infielder Ava Gardner kept up her hot streak, going 4-4 on the day with a two-run home run and an RBI single.

Gardner spoke about her

performance in these last few weeks.

"I contribute all of my success to the Lord," Gardner said. "He has guided me through the good and the bad times and I will continue to rely on him for strength. Along with this, my coaches here at Ferris and in past, along with my parents, have really pushed me to be the best player and person I can possibly be on and off the field."

While in game two, junior pitcher Cecelia Bell started the game for the Bulldogs. Bell pitched seven innings, only allowing five hits and one run, coming on a solo home run, while also adding three strikeouts.

Head coach Jake

Schumann spoke about returning home to Big Rapids.

"We are so grateful that we have the fan base that we have," Schumann said. "Returning home to our amazing parents and the community members who have adopted our team will be a great opportunity to showcase our talented squad. We are definitely looking forward to that opportunity."

Ferris State softball (16-11, 2-0 in GLIAC) will travel to take on Purdue Northwest (15-9, 1-1 in GLIAC) for the first two matchups of the weekend.

The last five seasons between these teams have been evenly matched, with the Pride holding a 12-10 record against the Bulldogs.

Last season, the two teams split the season series, going 2-2.

Purdue Northwest has had a strong 10-game stretch coming into the matchup, going 7-3 in their last 10 games. In those 10 games, the Pride averaged 6.6 runs a game, while only allowing 3.2 runs a game.

The Pride's offense is led by freshman infielder Gracie Jensen, who has a team-leading .406 average, a 1.047 OPS, eight extra base hits and one home run, while knocking in a GLIAC-leading 23 RBIs this season.

While the Bulldogs' offense has plenty of contributors, one standout player is Gardner. Gardner has a team leading five home runs, 23

RBIs, eight extra base hits, while sporting a .405 average and a 1.156 OPS.

The Bulldogs will then travel north to Allendale to take on the Grand Valley State Lakers (10-12, 1-1 in GLIAC).

The Lakers have historically played the Bulldogs tough, holding a record of 47-22 against the Bulldogs spanning back to 2003. Last season, Ferris went 3-2 against Grand Valley before losing to them in the GLIAC tournament by a score of 3-1.

Grand Valley has one of the better pitching staffs in the GLIAC, holding a team ERA of 2.50 and a 1.32 WHIP, with the standout pitcher in the rotation being sophomore Karli Dorr. Dorr has started seven games for

the Lakers, with a 2.00 ERA, a 1.21 WHIP, striking out 45 while walking just 12.

Ferris has a strong pitching staff, being led by freshman Katie Shuboy. Shuboy has started 10 games and pitched 55.1 innings, while having a 3.16 ERA, a 1.43 WHIP and striking out 36 while walking 22 batters.

The Ferris State Bulldogs softball team will take on the Purdue Northwest Pride on Saturday, March 28 for two games. Before heading north the following day to take on the Grand Valley State Lakers for another two games.

# Bulldog golf in full swing

## Ferris golf heads to Findianapolis Invitational

**Devin Wardrop**  
Sports Reporter

With about a month left until the playoffs begin, the men's and women's golf teams look to continue playing strongly as March comes to a close.

### Women

The women's golf team has been playing strong this year, posting Top-Ten finishes in September and October. This includes two separate second-place finishes at both the Bulldog Fall Classic in Big Rapids, Michigan, and the Glinda's Club Laker Fall Invite in Allendale, Michigan.

The Bulldogs scored a 303 at the Bulldog Fall Classic

behind Grand Valley, which won the event with a score of 583. Individually, senior Taylor Musselman led the team as she tied for fifth overall with a score of 149. Senior Kamryn Shannon also finished in the top ten, placing ninth with a 152.

At the Glinda's Club Laker Fall Invite, Ferris tied with Findlay for second place with a score of 593 and shooting 17 over par. Grand Valley won the invite with a score of 585 and shooting nine over par. Individually, Shannon led the Bulldogs and placed fifth with a 145, and sophomore Ashley Thomasma was right behind her in sixth with a score of 146.

The Bulldogs continue to post Top-15 finishes in the invites, most recently placing 11th at the Dallas Baptist Patriot Classic in Carmel, California, on March 16 and 17, scoring a 28 over par at the event. Shannon placed ninth at the event with a score of 224, while senior Lizzie Anderson tied for 12th with a 225.

Coming up on Monday, March 30, and Tuesday, March 31, the Ferris State women's golf team will head to Laconia, Indiana, to take part in the Findianapolis Intercollegiate tournament.

### Men

The Ferris State men's golf team have been playing

tough in their two months since they returned to the course for the first time since October. They posted Top-15 finishes in every invite, including three separate fourth-place finishes in September. The men kept up their Top-15 finishes with a sixth-place finish at the Doc Spragg Fall Invite and 14th at the Citrus Intercollegiate.

At the Doc Spragg, Ferris shot 293 as a team, individually, junior Cole Putnam tied for 10th with a total of 215. Senior Sam Havey tied for 39th with a 222 after shooting a 74 in the last round. At the Citrus Intercollegiate, Ferris State shot a 309 to end up in 14th. Sophomore

Ben Miller and Putnam tied for 39, both getting a 225 and shooting 9 over par. This tournament marked the end of the fall season.

Since the return, they've posted 13th place at the Lincoln Memorial Spring Kick-off in St. Augustine, Florida, and tied eighth at the Ralph Hargett Memorial at Monroe, North Carolina. At the Ralph Hargett Memorial, the Bulldogs scored a collective 878. Wingate, who hosted the event, won with a score of 838.

Havey led the Bulldogs at the event after tying for 15th place, scoring a 216. He shot a 70 in the first round, 74 in the second, and 72 in the fi-

nal round.

Havey believes in the team and that they're just getting started.

"I think we are just scratching the surface this year with our potential," Havey said. "We have a fairly young team with a lot of talent. I'm excited to keep on competing with these guys, and there's a lot of good scores ahead."

Following a trip to London, Tennessee, for the Tennessee River Rumble, the men's team will join the girls in Laconia, Indiana, for the Findianapolis Intercollegiate on Monday, March 30, and Tuesday, March 31.



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Senior Kamryn Shannon tees off at the GLIAC championship

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credit hours at the end of spring semester. In addition, students must submit an application including an essay describing their personal career goals and role an FSU degree will play in achieving those goals, a letter from the FSU alumna(us) describing the effect their FSU career had on their professional career, and a recommendation by an FSU staff or faculty member.

## DEADLINE IS MAY 15, 2026

### Important dates for the 2025-2026 academic year

Application posted online: December

May 15, 2026 – Application deadline

July 2026 – Scholarship recipients are selected and announced.

September/October 2026 - Legacy Luncheon honoring recipients.

Apply through the Scholarship Universe portal in your Ferris360 account.

\*All submissions must be made on line using MyScholarships.

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# Where are they now?

## Bulldog transfers and what they did in 2025-26



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Nathan Claerbaut averaged 9.6 points per game while averaging 6.3 rebounds a game in his final season as a Bulldog.

**Devin Wardrop**  
Sports Reporter

With the current nature of college athletics, the days of an athlete staying at one college for all four years of their college career is becoming rarer and rarer, with many deciding to enter the transfer portal and go find other opportunities at different schools.

Here are some Bulldogs who took their talents to other schools and what they ac-

complished this past season.

**Trinidad Chambliss**

Following a season of being a Harlon Hill finalist and leading the Bulldogs to their third national championship in four years in 2024, Chambliss entered the portal and ended up in Division I with Ole Miss.

In 15 games for the Rebels following the injury to starter Austin Simmons, Chambliss threw for 3,937 yards with 22 touchdowns to just three interceptions. He

also rushed for 527 yards and eight touchdowns and even had one catch for eight yards against the Florida Gators.

On his run to the Fiesta Bowl in the College Football Playoff Semi-Final game against the Miami Hurricanes, Chambliss won the 2025 SEC Newcomer of the Year

Chambliss had his breakout game on September 13 against Arkansas when he threw 21-29 for 353 yards

and a touchdown while adding 62 yards and two touchdowns on the ground in the 41-35 win over the Razorbacks.

**Sefa Saipaia**

Following the 2024 national championship win, Saipaia entered the transfer portal and ended up in Kalamazoo playing for Western Michigan.

Saipaia was a big part of the Broncos' best season in 10 years, as the team went 10-4 and won the MAC title

for the first time since 2016, en route to winning the Myrtle Beach Bowl 41-6 against Kennesaw State.

In 14 games for the Broncos, Saipaia recorded 27 solo tackles and assisted on 50 for 77 total tackles, and 5.5 sacks for 12 yards lost, as well as 1.5 sacks for five yards, while recording one interception.

**Nathan Claerbaut**

After his junior season in Big Rapids, where he averaged 9.6 points, 6.3 re-

bounds, and 1.1 assists in 34 games on the way to their NCAA Midwest Region Quarterfinal loss, the seven-footer followed Coach Andy Bronkema to Central Michigan.

In the 31 games he played for the Chippewas, Claerbaut averaged 12.3 points and 5.5 rebounds. His best game came on December 17 in their 85-65 win against Olivet when he had 31 points and 12 rebounds with two assists, two blocks, and a steal.

Claerbaut had 23 games of scoring ten points or more and recorded a double-double three times.

Claerbaut was named to the MAC All-Defensive Team and received HoopsHD All-MAC center.

**Jaxson Whitaker**

Along with Claerbaut, Whitaker also followed Bronkema to Mount Pleasant for his sophomore season. Whitaker started six games at Central but got minutes every game.

In the 31 games he played, Whitaker averaged 5.4 points and 1.3 rebounds off the bench. His highest-scoring game came on Feb. 14 in their 88-46 win against NIU, when he scored 19 points on 6-9 from the field and 5-7 from three-point range, and went 2-2 from the free-throw line.

With most of the 2025-26 seasons finished for the Bulldogs, with the exception of some sports, and the rise of the transfer portal and Name, Image and Likeness (NIL), keep an eye out to see if there are any transfers following this year.

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