In this February issue are some updates on a number of projects and services underway in Administration and Finance.

✓ As many of you know one of our students was shot in the early morning hours on Saturday morning (Feb. 1) at Venlo apartments parking lot. This was a result of an altercation that occurred as a party was ending between 4:00-4:30 a.m. I cannot thank the men and women enough from our own Public Safety Department, the Big Rapids City Public Safety Department, the Mecosta County Sheriff’s Department, and the Michigan State Police Emergency Services Unit. From the moment of the gun fire until the suspect was arrested, a little before midnight, these teams collaborated with an unending determination to identify, to locate, and to arrest the shooter.

I also want to publically thank the amazing partners across campus and beyond who stepped up to provide critical communications, to close buildings, to cancel events, to provide food for our emergency personnel, to provide food for well over 100 youth hockey tournament guests that had their schedule significantly delayed due to safety concerns, and on and on and on. While I am at risk of missing a unit involved in this I want to specifically thank representatives from the following areas: Athletics, Dining Services, Human Resources Safety Office, Katke Golf Clubhouse, Information Technology Services, Physical Plant, Residence Life and Housing, Student Affairs, Telecommunications, University Advancement & Marketing and President Eisler and Provost and Vice President Fritz Erickson.

I am incredibly proud of the Ferris State University team and how you all rallied to provide exceptional support for this shooting incident off campus which ultimately resulted in much of the investigation and arrest activity occurring on campus.

✓ The university has a new set of Performance Evaluation tools for administrative and administrative support employees. These new forms are to be used in the evaluations of all administrative and administrative support employees annually starting this spring. Hopefully you have seen the documents and maybe even attended one of the training sessions provided by our Human Resources staff. If you have not seen the documents and have administrative or administrative support employees that you oversee, please check the Human Resources website for these tools and other related information.

✓ Administration and Finance is a support division committed to providing quality customer services. We also strive to be a good neighbor and be an active participant in local Town/Gown relationships. For these reasons our division is co-sponsoring a customer service training program with the Mecosta County Chamber of Commerce. The program will be provided by a nationally known speaker and best-selling author Tony Rubleski. This training will be provided at the Holiday Inn on April 16 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. The university is a Chamber member so any employee at the university who wishes to participate in this training may do so at the Chamber member rate of $25 each. Students are encouraged to attend as well and can do so at a student discount rate of $10. Interested individuals can register through the Mecosta County Chamber of Commerce website.
Due to the very harsh winter weather we have received over the last couple of months the construction progress on the University Center renovation is now 3-4 weeks behind schedule. As the weather warms up to 20 degrees and above contractors will be able to resume their work. Plans are in place to make up the 3-4 weeks over the coming months.

Physical Plant is seeking bids from firms who are able to provide Contract Management Services to allow us to accelerate the volume of project work that we are able to accomplish in the coming months. While there are lots of detailed projects in the early planning stages, the three major areas include Academic building classroom and labatory renovations, housing facility improvements, and projects as part of our capital renewal and deferred maintenance program. Stay tuned for more detail on individual projects as we approach the summer months.

Kara Pellerito, our Energy Conservation Manager, continues to identify and oversee projects to help save our natural resources and our financial resources through improved energy utilization. These projects continue to primarily be in the areas of electrical and water consumption. The projects Kara will be working on over the next 2-3 months include:

- Energy efficient lighting (campus wide)
- Computer power management (campus wide)
- LED lamp installation – Katke Clubhouse
- Steam trap repairs (campus wide)
- Energy efficient lighting – West Campus Community Center

Our IT staff has been working diligently for the last six months planning and preparing for the conversion from Lotus Notes to Office 365. The IT staff has now gone through the conversion as the first mini pilot area. That process was constructive, as we learned a few things to help make the rollout for the rest of the campus smoother and more effective. Governmental Relations and General Counsel migrated recently as a second pilot phase to refine the migration processes. The Administration and Finance, Advancement and Marketing, Student Affairs, Executive Division, and Emeriti and Affiliates will be migrated from February 21-24. The Academic division and Kendall College of Art and Design will migrate to Office 365 on March 7-10. The IT staff is scheduling and delivering significant numbers of training classes with a focus on power users as well as the rest of us. While these training programs will take time we are convinced our users will have a much higher satisfaction level with the transition to Office 365 if you are able to participate in these training programs.

As our Finance staff strives to make some adjustments with the Concur system to better serve the needs of our users, and in particular infrequent travelers, they are currently conducting a survey to receive your specific input on things that are serving you well and things that are causing you frustration. We would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to participate in this critical survey to gather your input on this system.

Some of you are aware that Tamie Grunow is leading an initiative for the institution to add a Staff Center for Training and Development. Our goal is to continue through the research and design phases for this new center and have it operational by the end of the summer. Some of you may be questioning why we are adding the center for staff at this time. We want to continue to invest in the development and training of our staff. While this is always a good
thing to do, this will be even more valuable as we continue to control our costs in an effort to deal with the issues of affordability and student debt. Thank you to those of you who have already provided insights to Tamie Grunow on possible training and development content for this new center.

*We know and appreciate that our people make the difference in the projects and services we provide for you. I want to extend a big thank you to the many dedicated employees in Administration and Finance who work hard each day, throughout the year to provide quality services to the campus!*

*Jerry L. Scoby*

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Vice President for Administration and Finance