



Included below is a press release regarding the visit by author Lawrence Ross Jr., an expert on African American fraternities and sororities, to campus at Ferris State University. Further information is available by contacting Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services. A mugshot is attached.

For Immediate Release  
Nov. 15, 2010

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### **Author of Book on African American Fraternities and Sororities to Speak at Ferris**

BIG RAPIDS – Lawrence Ross Jr., author of “The Divine Nine: The History of African American Fraternities and Sororities”, will lecture at Ferris State University on topics related to his groundbreaking work on Wednesday, Nov. 17 in IRC 120 beginning at 7 p.m.

Ross, a national authority on Greek life, in general, and black Greek life, in specific, will speak about the historical origins of African American-based fraternal organizations, reasons for their existence and contemporary issues that impact members and organizations. As part of his presentation, Ross plans to discuss the struggles that fraternities and sororities face for relevancy in today's society, including pledging and hazing.

“People who attend this presentation will receive insight into why black Greek organizations were founded, their contributions to society and current issues facing those organizations,” said Michael Wade, assistant director of the Office of Multicultural Student Services at Ferris. “His book is the first to chronicle all of the historically black fraternities and sororities.”

Wade also noted that Ross will be available to sign copies of his book, the first to chronicle the history of all nine African American fraternities and sororities, for those who already own a copy or wish to purchase one.

“His knowledge will possibly bring a better understanding and respect for these organizations,” Wade added.

Ross has lectured at more than 350 colleges and universities largely on topics addressed in his book. Since it was published in 2000, “The Divine Nine” has been a *Los Angeles Times* and *Essence* magazine bestseller. As an authority on African American fraternal issues, Ross has written articles for CNN and The Root.com. Additionally, he has been interviewed by the BBC, NPR, *Essence* and other media outlets.

This event, sponsored by Ferris’ Black Greek Council and OMSS, is free and open to the public. Anyone with questions regarding this event or in need of assistance to attend may contact OMSS

at (231) 591-2617.



ROSS.jpg