

## Mission: 'Urban, research university'

YSU is an urban research university committed to becoming a national model for university-community engagement, expanding its regional focus to include national and international emphases and stimulating the economic, technological and cultural rebirth of Ohio.

Those are among the points included in the university's new mission and vision statements that will be used to guide YSU into the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

"The mission of the university defines and drives the strategic planning, program development and all other activities of the institution," said Bege Bowers, associate provost.

The new mission and vision statements, which replace those approved in 2001-02, were approved by the Board of Trustees last month.

In his Strategic Plan for Higher Education released last

spring, Eric Fingerhut, chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, called for YSU to

become an urban research university that is a major engine in the economic revitalization of the Mahoning Valley. The plan also called for all public universities in the state to create distinctive missions.

YSU last spring formed the Institutional Response Committee – chaired by Provost Ikram Khawaja – to develop revised mission, vision and core value statements. Over the summer and fall, the committee sent drafts of the statements to the university community for comment, and the drafts also were discussed with the Academic Senate, department chairs and other campus groups, before going to the board in December.

The new mission, vision and core value statements are available on the provost's

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### Core Values

*YSU holds the following values as essential to achieving the university's mission:*

- Centrality of Students
- Excellence and Innovation
- Integrity/Human Dignity
- Collegiality and Public Engagement

## Student wins Miss Ohio, shoots for national title

Champion resident Natasha Vivoda doesn't necessarily draw inspiration from the glamorous pageant queens of years long gone. She's not really encouraged by the touched-up magazine photos of super-models, the faces of plastic surgery-laden movie stars, or even the recognition that comes with the title of Miss Ohio USA.

She's just not that kind of girl.

Instead, Vivoda, a 21-year-old senior biology major at YSU, finds inspiration in her biggest fan – her grandfather, aka "Papa John."

"He's been through so much," Vivoda said about her grandfather, who has battled a number of serious health issues in recent years, including lung cancer,

strokes and seizures. "But he's hanging on, and he's so happy for me."

The 2005 Champion High School graduate said her grandfather's valiant struggle motivates her to succeed, including winning the Miss Ohio USA crown in late November. Next up is the Miss USA competition April 19 in Las Vegas, which will be broadcast live nationally by NBC.

"This is my year, and I want to bring home the Miss USA title for him," she said.

Preparing to represent Ohio and compete against 50 other young women for

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*YSU student Natasha Vivoda is crowned Miss Ohio USA.*



## eUpdate exclusives

For more news about YSU, read these and other stories in eUpdate at <http://cfweb.cc.yzu.edu/marketcomm/index.cfm>.

- **YSU graduate displays "audacity to persevere." More stories and photos from winter commencement.**
- **In response to mental health issues that many American troops experience after returning from service overseas, the YSU Community Counseling Clinic is participating in the "Give an Hour" program, which provides an opportunity for area licensed mental health professionals to donate an hour of their time each week to provide free counseling services for returning war veterans.**
- **Nominees sought for Diversity Leadership Recognition; Board of Trustees schedules 2009 meetings; Working-Class Studies introduces new website; Game of Hope Charity Classic; and much more in Campus News Roundup.**
- **Will Lemke is the new head coach of YSU's soccer team. Lemke comes to YSU after a successful tenure at NAIA Viterbo University in Wisconsin, where he won more than 80 games and was the winningest coach in the school's history.**

## Youngstown STATE UNIVERSITY

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# University lands second Kresge grant in five years

The Kresge Foundation, an independent, private foundation that provides grants to nonprofit institutions worldwide, has awarded a \$1.2 million challenge grant to YSU's campaign to build a new facility for the Williamson College of Business Administration.

"This grant will help give us the push needed to put the fund-raising campaign for the new building over the top," President David C. Sweet said. "But, just as important, this grant is the endorsement of a respected, world renowned foundation. It's a distinction that is sought by thousands of educational institutions across the country. It puts YSU in select company."

This is the second Kresge award for YSU. In 2003, the foundation provided a \$600,000 grant in YSU's fund-raising campaign to construct the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center.

Tony Lariccia, chair of the YSU Centennial Capital Campaign, said the grant reflects Kresge's continued endorsement of the university as a whole. "Kresge is not inter-

ested in grant-making only, but in assisting organizations to increase their fund-raising capacity by acquiring new donors and encouraging current donors to increase their levels of support," Lariccia said.

The fund-raising campaign for the new Williamson College of Business Administration is nearing the \$12.4 million mark, leaving \$3.6 million to be raised. If YSU raises \$2.4 million more, Kresge has agreed to provide \$1.2 million to meet the campaign's \$16 million goal. YSU plans to meet the Kresge challenge with support from

alumni, friends, students, businesses and organizations.

Sebastian Kresge founded the S.S. Kresge Co. in 1899 and started The Kresge Foundation 25 years later from his personal funds. Since then, the foundation has awarded more than 8,000 grants totaling more than \$2 billion to nonprofit organizations involved in health, the environment, arts and culture, education, human services



From the left: Tony Lariccia, chair of the YSU Centennial Capital Campaign; YSU President David C. Sweet; and Betty Jo Licata, dean of the Williamson College of Business Administration.

and community development.

The 110,000-square-foot Williamson College of Business Administration building will be constructed on the far south end of the YSU campus. Construction is expected to begin early this spring. The building is the centerpiece of YSU's Centennial Master Plan and represents the largest single capital expenditure in the university's 100-year history.

For photos and more information on the new building, visit <http://www.wcba.yzu.edu/newWCBA.html>. ■

## Faculty & Staff

Send items for "Faculty & Staff" to Cynthia Vinarsky at [cevinarsky@ysu.edu](mailto:cevinarsky@ysu.edu).

**Xiangjia J. Min**, assistant professor, Biological Sciences, co-authored a paper, titled "Uncorrected Nucleotide Bias in MtDNA can Mimic the Effects of Positive Darwinian Selection," which was published in the December 2008 issue of *Molecular Biology and Evolution*.

**Lee Slivinske**, professor, and **Johanna Slivinske**, part-time instructor, Social Work, published "*Technology in Long-Term Care: A Pilot Study*" in *The International Journal of Technology, Knowledge & Society*.

**Michael Theall**, associate professor, Teacher Education, was recently elected to a three-year term as president of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD). Theall and colleagues presented "The Roles and Skills of Faculty in U.S. and U.K. Higher Education Institutions: What Faculty Need to Succeed" at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, and at POD, they presented additional research titled "Implications and Applications of Data from Research on Faculty Work, Roles and Skills." Theall also gave an invited presentation, "Faculty Learning Communities as Leadership Vehicles for Exploring the Meta-Profession of the Professoriate and Revitalizing Collegial Campus Dialogue," at the annual National Lilly Conference on College Teaching at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

**Alina Lazar**, associate professor, Computer Science and Information Systems, and **Bradley Shellito**, associate professor, Geography, published a chapter entitled "Classification in GIS Using Support Vector Machines" in the *2008 Handbook of Research on Geoinformatics*.

**Paul R. Carr**, assistant professor, Educational Foundations, Research, Technology and Leadership, had an article entitled "Antiracist Education" published in the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Cultural and Social Foundations of Education* and an article entitled "The Equity Waltz in Canada: The connection between the formal and informal realities of racism" published in the November issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*.

**Zara Rowlands**, assistant professor, Human Ecology, presented a paper entitled "Crossing Borders: A Journey into Online Instruction" at the E-Learning Conference 2008 in Las Vegas in November. The accompanying paper was published in the conference proceedings and detailed the process and challenges of transforming a traditionally taught-course into one entirely administered online.

**Gary Salvner**, professor and chair, English, presented a session entitled "Young Adult Verse Novels" at the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention in San Antonio in November.

## Beeghly Center hosts first-ever ESPN hoops broadcast



ESPNU's Friday Night College Basketball Game of the Week comes to YSU Friday, Jan. 23 as the Penguins take on in-state rival Cleveland State.

The game, which tips off at 9 p.m., marks the first-ever live ESPN broadcast from YSU's Beeghly Center.

"It is an honor for our basketball team to play before a worldwide audience on ESPNU against our in-state rival,"

Penguins head coach Jerry Slocum said. "We

hope our fans, students, alumni, faculty and staff come out to support this great opportunity for our campus and our student athletes."

The first 2,500 fans at the game will receive a YSU pom-pom courtesy of Wendy's and MyValleySports.com. The first 750 YSU students will receive a Penguin 'White Out' t-shirt. Fans are encouraged to wear white to the game.

Also, the university is offering special \$2 general admission tickets to all YSU faculty and staff. Tickets must be purchased before 5 p.m. on game day.

"We need you in attendance at Beeghly

Center," Slocum said. "Please take advantage of the special ticket price and 'White Out' our arena."

The athletic ticket office in Stambaugh Stadium is open daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information about tickets and the game, call 330-941-1YSU.

Gates open at 8 p.m. at Beeghly Center.

The game marks the 70th meeting between YSU and Cleveland State. In a series that dates back to the 1930-31 season, YSU leads 35-34. ■





# YSU grad named Ohio's top teacher

Jennifer Walker of Canfield, an East High School teacher and YSU alum, was named the 2009 Ohio Teacher of the Year by the Ohio Department of Education. She was presented the award by Deborah Delisle, state superintendent of public instruction, during an EHS assembly.

Walker, who earned a bachelor's degree from YSU in 1994 and a master's degree in 1999, said the fact that the title went to a Youngstown teacher proves that quality education exists in the Mahoning Valley. "Being named Ohio Teacher of the Year is validation that there are good teachers in Youngstown and good teachers in inner-city schools," she said.

Walker, who teaches English and Advanced Placement Literature and Composition to ninth- through 12th-grade students at EHS, was selected from among four finalists by a statewide review panel following a grueling interview process. She also serves as the lead literacy teacher and chairperson of the school's English department.

Walker said she thought she was chosen for the award because of her passion and love for teaching and her students, and for her flexible approach to teaching. "No

two days are the same," she said. "You may spend hours on lesson plans but then the students dictate where it goes."

A 10-year teaching veteran of Youngstown city schools, Walker previously taught at Rayen High School in Youngstown for four years. She also taught in Choffin Career Center's Junior High Gifted and Talented program, and before that, she taught at Geneva High School for four years.

Despite her many achievements, Walker has one goal she'd like to accomplish — to earn her doctorate degree in English when she retires from teaching at EHS. "My dream job would be to work at YSU, teaching potential English teachers," she said. ■

*Story by Britta Snowberger*



*YSU graduate and Ohio Teacher of the Year Jennifer Walker in her classroom at East High School.*

## Mission

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web site at <http://www.yzu.edu/pro-vost/index.shtml>.

Bowers said the statements emphasize YSU's growing research capabilities, the development of strong graduate programs, connections between research and the community, and the university's role in stimulating development in the region.

Fingerhut has also asked that universities develop academic Centers of Excellence on each campus. YSU's Institutional Response Committee is continuing to meet to help identify those centers, which must be submitted to the Board of Regents by June 30. ■

## Miss Ohio USA

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the title of Miss USA, Vivoda said she will maintain a steady workout, nutrition and pageant practice regimen through April for the competition's bathing suit, evening gown and interview portions. Additionally, she will complete a number of service projects related to breast and ovarian cancer and will make hospital visits as part of her Miss Ohio USA reign. A part-time behavior technician at Hillside Rehabilitation Hospital, Vivoda said she is passionate about participating in these events.

"I want to do as much as I can this year," she said. "I'd love to go to children's hospitals and spend time with the children there."

The upcoming year for Vivoda will be full of statewide — and if she wins,

national — events, and she said she plans to blog about her experiences on the Miss Ohio USA Web site so that friends, family and community members can keep up with her journey.

Due to the demands that accompany the Miss Ohio USA title and the three-week Miss USA competition in Nevada, Vivoda said she plans to take spring semester off at YSU. When she returns to the university in fall 2009, Vivoda plans to graduate with a degree in biology and enroll in the doctorate program in physical therapy at YSU.

Accounts of Vivoda's Miss Ohio USA and Miss USA experiences will be available at [www.missohiousa.com](http://www.missohiousa.com). ■

*Story by Britta Snowberger*