

## YSU alumni gifts pushed rec center campaign over the top

Thanks to a \$100,000 gift from the Youngstown State University Alumni Society, YSU has surpassed the \$12.1 million goal to construct the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center on campus.

"It is most appropriate that alumni are able to make a gift to benefit the students who will one day be alumni themselves and support the students of the future," said Atty. Larry Richards of Boardman, YSU graduate and president of the Alumni Society, which represents nearly 80,000 YSU graduates.

Richards said the society's board of directors voted unanimously to give to the recreation and wellness center campaign.

YSU launched the \$12.1 million fund-raising campaign in January 2002. Nearly 650 individuals, including graduates, faculty, staff and other YSU supporters, have made donations to the campaign. The campaign total is now \$12.13 million. Major gifts include \$2 million from the John S. and Doris M. Andrews Trust, \$1.5 million from John and Denise York and \$1 million from the Ward and Florence Simon Beecher Foundations.

Larry E. Esterly, chair of the YSU Board of Trustees, said the board was committed to building the rec center without increasing student fees.

"We were confident in the support that would come from YSU's extended community," he said. "We also were confident in the leadership of (YSU President) David Sweet. Today, that confidence has been validated."

The gift from the Alumni Society is critical because it triggers a \$600,000 challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation, a private foundation that provides money to nonprofit institutions worldwide.

"Our alumni have been the impetus of the success of this campaign all along," Sweet said. "This generous gift from the Alumni Society taking us over the top strongly demonstrates they want to give back to the institution that means so much to them."

The front entrance plaza to the 65,000-square-foot rec center will be named Alumni Plaza.

Construction of the two-level rec center, which will be attached to the west end of YSU's Kilcawley Center and stretch almost to Fifth Avenue, began in April. The center, featuring a fitness center, climbing wall, racquetball courts and jogging track, will be open by the start of fall semester 2005. It is the first YSU facility to be built entirely with private funds since Ward Beecher Science Hall in 1967.

Several YSU alumni have made major contributions to the campaign, including the Bresnahan family, Anthony Cafaro, Don Constantini, Lee and Diana Hively, Ronald M. and Karen A. Krisher, Anthony and Mary Lariccia, Robert and Marilyn O'Leary, Helen Stambaugh, Frank and Norma Watson and Anthony Payiavlas.

Paul McFadden, YSU's chief development officer also noted that \$1.5 million of the \$12.1 million was raised from contributors outside of the Mahoning Valley, including Jack DePizzo, Anthony Petrarca, Carmen and Gail Policy, James and Arlene Staaf Living Trust, Jim and Ellen Tressel and L.B. McKelvey on behalf of the McKelvey family.

The Alumni Society's donation will be formally announced at Forte on the Fifty on July 10 at Stambaugh Stadium.

For more information, visit the Andrews Recreation and Wellness Center web site at <http://www.ysu.edu/develop/>.