

Staff retirees leave legacy, lasting memories

Bill Sperlazza won't be idle for long when he retires March 1 as YSU's director of housing and residence life.



Bill Sperlazza

Youngstown and converting them into apartment complexes and other business ventures.

Silvia Jimenez-Hyre is equally ambitious. Assistant to the dean and outreach

The 33-year YSU veteran says he's excited about landing a position with the The Frangos Group, a Cleveland-based development company that's buying historic buildings in downtown

coordinator in the College of Fine and Performing Arts, Hyre will move to the Columbus area after retirement to be closer to her five grandchildren and hopes to find a similar position there.



Silvia Jimenez-Hyre

"I'm retiring from YSU, but not from my profession," she says. "I have too much energy for that."

Sperlazza and Jimenez-Hyre are among 45 YSU employees set to retire March 1, bringing to 134 the number of university employees that have retired since April 2006 under an early retirement

incentive plan. Those 134 employees, from nearly every campus department, represent more than 3,500 years of service to the university.

"These employees have committed their careers to YSU," President David C. Sweet said. "The successes we have achieved as an institution are due in large part to the hard work and dedication of each and every one of them."

For some, the departure will be bittersweet. "I've been here 41 years, and I've enjoyed every minute of it," says Bill Countryman, executive director of enrollment

services and university registrar. "I thought the decision to retire would be easy, but as it gets closer I realize how much I'm going to miss the students and the friendships I've made here."



Bill Countryman

Technology has revolutionized the way students register for classes, says Countryman, recalling the long lines of anxious undergraduates vying for their top course choices in the 1960s, 70s and 80s when registration was done by hand. YSU was one of the first universities in Ohio to develop a computer registration process.

"The old way was so tough on the kids, and it was exciting to be a part of finding a better way to do things," he says. "That's what we're all about here in this department, helping the students to get from point A to point B."

Sharyn Fees, a Secretary 2 in the art department and program administrator

Enrollment up...again

Enrollment at YSU is up by 253 students or 2 percent this spring semester, the highest in 14 years.

The number of students on campus is 12,755, according to official enrollment numbers recorded at the end of the 14th day of spring semester classes. That's compared to 12,502 last spring semester.

It's the highest spring semester enrollment since 1994, when YSU recorded 12,854 students.

Since 2000, enrollment has increased by 1,883 students or 17.3 percent.

Minority student enrollment also continued upward. In the last year alone, the number of minority students on campus has jumped by 239 or nearly 12 percent, from 1,996 in spring 2007 to 2,235 this spring.

Since 1999, the number of minority students on campus has nearly doubled, from 1,162 to 2,235. That's an increase of 1,073 students or 92 percent. Minority students now make up 17.5 percent of the total student body, compared with 10.5 percent in 1999. ■

Spring semester enrollment since 2000:

2008	12,755
2007	12,502
2006	12,192
2005	12,396
2004	12,360
2003	12,215
2002	11,833
2001	11,155
2000	10,872

Source: Office of Institutional Research

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University expands effort for on-line courses



Annette Burden

In an effort to increase the number and quality of on-line academic offerings, YSU has named Annette Burden, associate professor of mathematics, as the new interim director of distance learning.

"It's important that the university be more proactive in creating a robust set of distance learning opportunities," said Charles Singler, interim associate provost.



Charles Singler

Burden, who has developed various online courses in YSU's Department of Mathematics and Statistics, said she is excited about the university's growing

commitment to on-line course offerings and degree programs.

"This could mean so much to the university in terms of enrollment," said Burden, whose experience in distance learning also includes work as a consultant to several other universities. "It also could mean so much to the community, in terms of opening up our programs to people who otherwise might not seek a college education."

The inception of distance learning at YSU dates to 1999, when the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services – under the direction of Dean John Yemma – took the lead in developing on-line courses. YSU currently offers two on-line degree programs, both in HHS: bachelor's of applied science in allied health, and master's of health and human services.

On-line courses and degree offerings are part of the reason enrollment at HHS has skyrocketed, up 37 percent between 1998 and 2007. University-wide, between fall semester 2004 and summer semester 2007, 1,603 students enrolled in distance courses, including classes in philosophy, mathematics and management, as well as HHS.

While the university has made strides, distance learning offerings remain scattered and unconnected, Singler said. Part of Bur-

den's job will be to coordinate the various programs already in existence and to help facilitate the creation of more distance learning activities across the campus as a whole, he said.

"We need someone who is going to bring all of this together across colleges and across departments," he said.

Singler said that expanding distance learning is one of several goals outlined in the university's Academic Strategic Plan 2007-2013. Singler said he is also now reviewing a Distance Learning Strategic Plan developed by a committee chaired by Yemma. Among the recommendations in the plan is to increase enrollment in distance learning programs by 25 percent and to establish an organized institution-wide approach to the administration, development, funding and delivery of distance education.

Distance learning also is part of YSU's periodic institution-wide accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. YSU is asking HLC for broader approval for the university to offer on-line courses and degree programs. The HLC evaluation team is scheduled to visit YSU Feb. 18 to 20. ■

eUpdate exclusives

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

- YSU's Web Site Advisory Committee is conducting two surveys as it prepares to launch a redesign of the university's home page. One of the surveys is online at <http://redesign.yzu.edu>. An ad hoc committee will interpret the results of both surveys and decide on a new

look for the YSU home page. Once a new web site has been designed, the advisory committee will look to repeat the process of getting feedback on the new site before going live later this year.

- "Red, White & Green" is the name of the new newsletter by the YSU GreenGroup, a new organization consisting of students, faculty and staff. The aim of the GreenGroup is to see the university prioritize sustainability and resource conservation as they apply to institutional operations, and to curriculum and education in the surrounding community.
- For the first time in 15 years, YSU's football team starts the 2008 season with two road games. The 12-game schedule includes six games at Stambaugh Stadium, four of which are against teams that won at least

eight games last year. See eUpdate for the complete schedule.

- Campus News Roundup includes photo and stories about the annual Job Fair sponsored by the YSU nursing department, Shipka lecture by Carolyn Merchant of the University of California at Berkeley, a gift to the Rich Center for Autism at YSU to study a new Home Outreach Program, the kick off of RecycleMania on campus, YSU Diversity Week activities and much more.
- Congress is moving to pressure colleges to contain tuition. The House of Representatives has approved legislation to renew the Higher Education Act that would increase what colleges will have to report on their finances and create lists of colleges that increase their tuitions significantly, according to *Insider Higher Ed*.

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Kin P. Moy, assistant professor, Electrical Engineering Technology, attended the International Organization for Standardization EMC working group meeting in Sydney, Australia, as chairman of the U.S. delegation. The ISO working group is responsible for developing global automotive EMC test standards, utilized for vehicle product specifications and government regulatory requirements.

Shane V. Smith, assistant professor, Geological & Environmental Sciences, presented a poster co-authored by John A. Wolff of Washington State University entitled "A Fused Tuff in the Tertiary Grande Ronde Basalt, Columbia River Basalt Group, West-central Idaho" at the Geological Society of America annual meeting. Smith also presented an invited colloquium to the Department of Geology at Kent State University entitled "Applying Columbia River Basalt Stratigraphy to Interpret Emplacement Mechanisms of Lava Flows." He also presented an invited lecture to the Pittsburgh Geological Society in January entitled "Reconstructing Paleodrainage Networks in the Miocene Columbia River Basalt Group, Clearwater Embayment, west-central Idaho and southwestern Washington.

James J. Carroll, professor, Physics and Astronomy, co-authored "Identification of a High-Spin Isomer in ^{99}Mo " with colleagues from the University of Surrey, Australian National University, University of Massachusetts-Lowell, TRIUMF (Canada) and Argonne National Laboratory, in the October 2007 issue of the journal *Physical Review C*. Also, with YSU undergraduate students **Trevor Balint**, **Nathan Caldwell** and **Geoffrey Trees**, Carroll presented talks on work in the YSU Isomer Physics Project at the meeting of the Ohio Section of the American Physical Society, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, October 2007. The theme of the meeting was "Doing front-line research with undergraduate students."

Michael Clayton, assistant professor, Psychology, published "Increasing Turn Signal Use by Drivers Exiting a University Parking Garage: A Comparison of Passive and

Mediated Prompting" in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*.

Deborah Mower, assistant professor, Philosophy and Religious Studies, presented the paper "Teaching Ethics Via Sympathy" at the 9th International Conference on Ethics Across the Curriculum at the National University of Ireland in Dublin.

Anwarul Islam, assistant professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering, has had his article "Performance of AASHTO Girder Bridges under Blast Loading" accepted for publication in *Engineering Structures of Elsevier*.

Johanna Krontiris-Litowitz, professor, Biological Sciences, presented "Sex based Differences in the Architecture of the Hypertrophied Heart in Salt-stressed Borderline Hypertensive Rates" at the American Physiological Society Conference on Sex and Gender in Cardiovascular-Renal Physiology and Pathophysiology in Austin, Texas.

Peter Norris, professor, Chemistry published the invited review article "Pyranosyl N-glycosyl amines: emerging targets with diverse biological potential" in a special edition of *Current Topics in Medicinal Chemistry* devoted to the synthetic and medicinal chemistry of carbohydrates.

Fred Viehe, associate professor, History, published "Neighborhood Invasions as a Pattern of Ethnocultural Violence in Jacksonian America" in the *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities (2008)*.

Diane Barnes, associate professor, History, presented the paper, "The Strange Career of a Slave's Narrative: Reader Responses to the Autobiographies of Frederick Douglass," at the annual history conference of the Athens Institute for Education and Research in Athens, Greece. She was also invited to serve as a major grant reviewer for the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History program.



Advanced Manufacturing

The YSU College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics hosted the Winter Meeting of the Advanced Manufacturing Initiative on Feb. 5. STEM Dean Martin Abraham encouraged local businesses to explore partnerships with the university and discussed how the new college can benefit local manufacturers.



Retirees

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Sharyn Fees

for the Summer Honors Institute, says she feels like she's "adopted" many of the student workers in her department.

"I think of myself as a problem solver. That's what I

do everyday," she says. "I love helping students when they come to me with problems that they think are just unsolvable. I think I'll miss that the most."

Gardening and home improvement projects are on the retirement agenda for Fees, who retires after 30 years. She'll also keep one hand in her profession by continuing her role as secretary of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society.

Jimenez-Hyre says founding the university's Center for International Studies and Programs was a highlight of her career so far, and she's maintained contacts with former students all over the world. E-mail will allow her to continue those friendships, she says, when she and her husband relocate.

Student relationships have also been a high point for Sperlazza, who estimates he's directly or indirectly employed and supervised as many as 5,000 student work-

ers in more than three decades at YSU, first at Kilcawley Center and more recently through the Department of Housing and Residence Life.

"I get e-mails, phone calls, sometimes a former student will even stop in to tell me what a wonderful influence their experience working in my departments have made in their lives. Nothing makes me

happier," he says with a grin, recounting recent visits from an engineering graduate and a business college alum, both highly successful in their careers.

"I always try to make the point that a student can accomplish anything at YSU that he or she can accomplish anywhere else." ■

Story by Cynthia Vinarsky



MathCounts

Tiera Frazier and Rheyana Johnson of East Middle School in Youngstown work on a problem during the 2008 MathCounts competition Feb. 5 in Kilcawley Center. More than 200 students from 30 middle and junior high schools throughout the tri-county region competed. The event is sponsored by the Mahoning Valley Society of Professional Engineers and the William Rayen School of Engineering and Engineering Technology.