

Sweet finds home in YSU community

BY ANGELA GIANOGLIO
Jambar Editor

Jones, Pugsley, Coffelt, Humphrey and Cochran. They are not only the names of Kilcawley Center rooms and a YSU honors program but also the names of university presidents.

The newest addition to this list is Dr. David Sweet, who took office July 1, making him the sixth YSU president.

Countless articles and news briefs have identified him as the former dean of the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University and chair of the Ohio Urban University Program.

But who was Sweet before he showed up at CSU?

A native of New York, Sweet was born in Webster, which is a small suburb of Rochester.

Because his mother was employed by the University of Rochester, Sweet had the benefit of attending college tuition-free. Although he majored in psychology, Sweet found an interest in economics and geography during his junior and senior years, which led him to a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"I got very interested in economic geography, so I decided I wanted to pursue that in graduate study. I got opportunities for assistantships at Syracuse and North Carolina, which would take me outside of the state. That's what led me to Chapel Hill," Sweet said.

In 1965 Sweet married his wife Patricia, and by 1967 he had begun his doctoral work at The Ohio State University.

"I had always toyed with the idea of going back for my Ph.D. So as I was doing research for [a contract research facility] called the Battelle Institute, I became part of the Economic Development division. That led me on a part-time basis to enroll at Ohio State in

geography and economics and ultimately pursue my Ph.D.," he said.

Sweet added, "Very early in my career I became exposed to technology and the sciences. It shaped my philosophy of education that we cannot be discipline bound. We have to be reaching out across disciplinary barriers because working together is the only way you're going to change anything in a community."

Sweet said that this philosophy was one of his main platforms while speaking to incoming students during the Student Orientation, Advisement and Registration Program during the summer.

"I'm a strong believer in what you call experiential education. My message [to incoming students] is if you want to fully take advantage of your education and the opportunities we present here, then you have to reach out and find an educational opportunity where you take that classroom experience and immediately begin seeing how it applies," he said.

In the years following his graduation from OSU, Sweet was the director of the department of economic and community development and the Ohio department of development from 1971 to 1975. From 1975 to 1978 he was the commissioner on the Ohio Public Utilities Commission.

In 1978 Sweet accepted his last position as dean of the LCUA at CSU where he remained until his selection as YSU president.

On the homefront, Sweet has four children named Britton, Melissa, Marc and Kathryn and two grandsons, Alexander and Nicolas.

His new home near YSU is on Fairway Drive in Liberty, and he said it is a large brick home with plenty of surrounding trees.

See SWEET, page 21



KATIE EGOLF / THE JAMBAR

SWEET

SWEET, continued from page 1

"For the last 22 years we have lived in a large brick house with a lot of trees, so we're very much at home," he said.

Sweet said he is making himself at home on campus as well.

He said he has a plan to determine where YSU is now, where it is going and how it is going to get there.

"That is a paradigm that has served me well in my years as a student. So the first phase of my presidency is trying to get a handle on where we are in terms of issues like enrollment, diversity and partnerships, which I think are very important," Sweet said.

In a memo to the YSU campus community, Sweet wrote, "I have identified three themes that appear to be the most relevant to addressing fundamental issues facing YSU today: enrollment, diversity and partnerships."

Sweet said he wants to form these partnerships with institutions and businesses in the surrounding area as well as increase internship opportunities for YSU students and create more recruitment for students in the Youngstown and Warren City Schools.

"What I'm looking for are the institutional partnerships, the sustained, long-term high impact relationships with the school districts and other types of organizations where we can benefit from each other," he said.

Sweet said one of the most important issues to address, which also ties in with building community partnerships, is diversity.