

YSU extends president's contract to 2010

David C. Sweet will remain the president of Youngstown State University through June 2010 under a contract approved today by the YSU Board of Trustees.

"Over the past four years, Dr. Sweet has provided the leadership that has helped increase YSU's visibility, quality and reputation as a leading higher education institution in Ohio and beyond," said Larry Esterly, board chair.

"Dr. Sweet's contract extension will provide the stable, proven leadership that YSU and the community needs as the university approaches its centennial in 2008."

Sweet said he looks forward to moving the institution forward on many fronts.

"I want to thank the trustees for their continued confidence," Sweet said.

"We have made much progress over the past four years, particularly in the areas of enrollment, diversity and community partnerships. I look forward to working with the trustees, faculty, staff, students and the community to build on those successes."

Former dean of the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University, Sweet became YSU's sixth president in July 2000. His annual base salary of \$203,520 has not been increased since July 2002.

Under the contract extension, the salary will increase by 3 percent or \$6,106 to \$209,626 retroactive to July 1, 2004. In comparison, the base salary for the president of Kent State University is \$259,085 annually, while the president of the University of Akron makes \$272,826 a year.

Sweet said he and his wife, Pat, will donate this year's \$6,106 pay raise to the university. The money will go to support the Andrews Student Wellness and Recreation Center and needs-based scholarships, he said.

Salary increases for the remaining years of the contract will be tied to federal cost of living adjustments of no less than 2 percent and no more than 4 percent annually.

Sweet also receives an annual housing allowance of \$52,615 and an annual car allowance of \$7,938, but the contract extension calls for phasing out those allowances over the next 3.5 years, beginning in January 2005. Instead, those amounts will be rolled into Sweet's base salary.

Esterly said Sweet has accomplished much in his four years at YSU: increasing enrollment by 11.1 percent, the highest growth rate in the state; raising \$12.1 million for construction of the rec center, the only privately-financed center of its kind among public universities in Ohio; increasing campus research activity to record levels; completing the \$22 million University Courtyard Apartments project in Smoky Hollow; and developing numerous community and regional partnerships, including the Early College High School and Wick Neighbors Inc. initiatives.

He said the six-year contract extension will provide YSU the stability and benefit of Sweet's proven effective leadership as the university faces many challenges in the years ahead, including the implementation of a campus-wide computer technology plan, the continuation of the university's centennial capital fund-raising campaign, the implementation of a Campus Master Plan, the celebration of the university's centennial in 2008 and a national accreditation review by the North Central Accreditation Association in 2007-09.