

Marketing research will help guide YSU's future



Mark Van Tilburg

With YSU at a pivotal point in its 100-year history, preparations are underway to reposition and rebrand the university within the context of Chancellor Eric Fingerhut's *Strategic Plan for Higher Education*

2008 -2017.

"In an increasingly dynamic marketplace, the gap between elite institutions with strong national reputations and public universities known only locally is ever-widening, and the 'brand' of an institution is more important than ever," said Mark Van Tilburg, executive director of marketing and communications.

"Within this context and Chancellor Fingerhut's charge, we must craft an effective marketing strategy and implementation plan that will allow the university to strengthen its market position and distinguish itself from its peers."

Van Tilburg emphasized that effective marketing must be grounded in accurate and actionable research and information, not simply rely upon intuition and anecdote. While some data is available about prospective and current students, there is not sufficient information about perceptions of the university among current high school students and other key stakeholder audiences, he said.

The last comprehensive marketing study at YSU was conducted in 2002 and, according to Van Tilburg, "that marketing

information and data is too old to be actionable in a marketplace as volatile and complex as ours."

A formal request for proposals was issued in December and 13 proposals were received from firms from across the nation specializing in marketing research. A review committee of six (including staff, faculty and administrators) independently evaluated the proposals and recommended Simpson-Scarborough. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., Simpson-Scarborough was chosen based upon the scope of their work and their in-depth background in higher education marketing research, coupled with the clarity of deliverables and price, Van Tilburg said.

In this first phase, their research will

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Students take Supermileage challenge

With gas prices again on the rise, you're feeling pretty good about getting 45 miles per gallon in your new Honda Civic hybrid. If you own a Toyota Prius — at nearly 50 miles per gallon — you're probably feeling even better

Well, how about a vehicle that gets 1,000 miles per gallon — or more?

A group of senior engineering majors at YSU are among hundreds of college and university students constructing experimental vehicles this spring for the Society of Automotive Engineers' annual Supermileage competition in early June at the Eaton Corporation Marshall Proving Grounds in Marshall, Mich., west of Detroit.

On a single gallon of gas, these lightweight aluminum vehicles can travel from

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Mechanical engineering students Jeff Michael and Adam Wolfgang work on YSU's Supermileage car in Moser Hall. Other team members are Jason Lisko and Megan Genuske.

Schwebel family donates \$250K

The YSU Board of Trustees has designated the café in the new Williamson College of Business Administration building as the Schwebel Café in recognition of a \$250,000 gift given by the Schwebel family.

The donation will help support construction of the new business building.

With a long history of philanthropic support of YSU and the community, the Schwebel family made a leadership gift in 2003 to the establishment of the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center, and in 1995, the Schwebel Reception Room in Kilcawley Center was named in the family's honor after their contribution to The Campaign for Youngstown State University.

Joseph Schwebel is an active member of the President's Council and the Board of Directors for the YSU Foundation. The Schwebel family owns and operates the Schwebel Baking Co., established in 1906. ■



Women's History Month

Hallie Liberto, a faculty member in the Philosophy Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, talked about "Prostitution and Alienation of Sexual Rights" in Kilcawley Center on March 25 as part of YSU's celebration of Women's History Month. During her visit to campus, Liberto also lectured on "The Ethics of Polyamorous Marriage."

History professor presents at Oxford Round Table, England



Fred Viehe

Fred Viehe, YSU associate professor of history, has devoted the last five years of his research to social justice issues, culminating in a paper on atavistic, or antiquated, culture.

In recognition of his efforts, Viehe spoke at the by-invitation-only Oxford Round Table symposium March 22 through 27 in Oxford, England. The symposium was themed, "Social Justice: Poverty, Food and Race – An Interdisciplinary Perspective."

"Since the focus [of the conference] was on social justice, I largely suspect that my recent work on this subject caught someone's eye, and that resulted in an invitation," said Viehe of Boardman.

Viehe, one of 42 scholars from across the world invited to the six-day Round Table, presented his paper, "Atavistic Culture: The Bête Noire of Social Change." Viehe, who has been at YSU for 24 years, said the paper examines how "historically, minority groups have been thwarted and frustrated by those in the dominant culture who use atavistic values and norms to prevent social justice."

Written specifically for the Oxford Round

Table, "Atavistic Culture" focuses on American atavistic cultures that opposed Irish immigrants in the mid-19th century, and British atavistic values that arose with the arrival of West Indian immigrants in the mid-20th century.

Having presented to like-minded scholars on the topics of poverty, food and race within social justice, Viehe said he hoped to enlighten his peers about the restricting nature of atavistic values within the realm of social change.

"Hopefully, what they learned was that social justice and social change are often opposed by those who advocate that society continue to be organized using ancient, antiquated and passé values that have long outlived their usefulness," he said.

Viehe, who earned his doctoral degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, likened his visit to the conference to a tennis match – one only improves if he or she plays with a more talented athlete.

"On one hand, it is a high honor" to have been chosen, he said. "But far more importantly, it is a unique opportunity to discuss an interest I deeply care about with others who share my interests and concerns."

For more on the Oxford Round Table, visit www.oxfordroundtable.com. ■

Story by Britta Snowberger

eUpdate exclusives

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

- **Two YSU students who are part of the university's Isomer Physics Project present a research poster at the University Clean Energy Alliance of Ohio's third annual workshop in Columbus.**
- **YSU Flute Festival; YSU hosts IEEE Region 2 Student Activities Conference; 57th Greek Sing; Blood mobile; "What Not to Wear"; and much more.**

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Faculty & Staff

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Bonnie Young Laing, assistant professor, Social Work, had an article entitled "Organizing Community and Labor Partnerships for Community Benefits Agreements in African American Communities: Ensuring Successful Coalitions" published in the *Journal of Community Practice* special issue on economic justice, labor and community practice.

Bradley Shellito, associate professor, Geography, coauthored a peer-reviewed journal article entitled "SATELLITES: Students and Teachers Exploring Local Landscapes to Interpret the Earth from Space," which was published in *The Journal of Geoscience Education*. Shellito's coauthors were Judy Lambert, Mikell Hedley, Kevin Czajkowski, Carolyn Merry, William Slattery, Scott Sheridan, Teresa Benko and Mandy Munro-Stasiuk.

Yogendra M. Panta, assistant professor, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, presented four first-authored papers at the 2008 American Chemical Society 42nd WRM Conference in Las Vegas. The papers were titled "Electrochemical Detection of Mercury Under Magneto-hydrodynamic (MHD) Convection,"

"Electrochemical Surface Plasmon Resonance (E-SPR) Detection of Mercury Under MHD Convection," "Electrodeposition of Radionuclides Under MHD Convection for Alpha Spectrometric Determination," and "Mercury Content of Tobacco Products by Means of Automated Combustion Amalgamation Atomic Absorption Spectrometry." The papers were presented in the sessions "Lab-on-a-Chip Technology: Microfluidics/nanofluidics, for Chemical and Biochemical Applications" and "Mercury, Lead, Arsenic, Chromium and Other Contaminants in the Environment and in Consumer Products."

Kin P. Moy, assistant professor, Electrical Engineering Technology, participated in the International Standards Organization EMC test standards working group meeting in SAE World Headquarter in Troy, Michigan, in February. He served as the chairman of the U.S. delegation, which included representatives from automotive manufacturers and suppliers. Global automotive representatives attended the meeting.

William Greenway, professor, English, had his poems, "Just Man" and "Shinto," published in the *Artful Dodge*.

Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez, director, Dr. James Dale Ethics Center, and professor, Philosophy and Religious Studies, published a revised version of his article, "Civilian Populations in War," in the *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics*, 2nd edition, and his article titled "Ethics of Nuclear War" was published in the *International Encyclopedia of Peace*. Palmer-Fernandez was a panelist on "The Role of Psychologist in Military Interrogations" at the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, and he also served as judge for the XIVth Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. He was also appointed book review editor for the *Journal of Religion, Conflict and Peace*.

Tammy A. King, assistant professor, and **John M. Hazy**, associate professor, Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences, along with staff members of the Martin P. Joyce Juvenile Justice Center, obtained a Title II Grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services for \$45,000 to help lower the number of arrests of minority youth in Mahoning County. The grant provides for a juvenile diversion officer to work with these youths, their parents and the school administrators/teachers educating the young people. ■



SMARTS features 'Itsi Kitsi'

This spring it will be raining cats and beatniks at the YSU SMARTS Center Gallery in downtown Youngstown.

Through May 9, nationally acclaimed neo-pop artist and cartoonist Chris Yambar brings his signature brand of over-the-top entertainment to the gallery with 20 new paintings featuring his characters Mr. Beat and Itsi Kitsi – Happy Adventure Cat.

Yambar, a native of Youngstown, is a well-traveled national art celebrity who has created more than 2,100 painted images.

The SMARTS Center is located at 258 Federal Plaza West in downtown Youngstown, adjacent to the DeYor Performing Arts Center. Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ■

Supermileage

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Youngstown to New York and back, and still have some gas left in the tank.

"There are about 10 competitions like these across the nation for mechanical engineering students, and they really allow students to practice their skill sets in a real world environment," said Dan Suchora, professor and chair of the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering.

This year's Supermileage team consists of mechanical engineering majors Jason Lisko of Girard, Jeff Michael of Boardman, Adam Wolfgang of Struthers and Megan Genuske of Canfield. For the competition, the students are constructing a three-wheeled vehicle with an aluminum chassis around the competition-issue, one-cylinder, four-cycle Briggs & Stratton engine.

"Everyone gets the same stock engine, but you can modify it however you'd like,"

said Wolfgang. "The goal is really to think outside the box to get the best mileage you can."

This year, YSU's Supermileage team, which has been working on the project since the end of last semester, is continuing the work of last year's team. Due to a few mechanical issues, last year's vehicle did not pass the braking portion of the competition's pre-run examinations, which also consist of technical, maneuverability, stability and incline inspections, and the team was forced to drop out of the competition.

Because the competition guidelines state that the vehicle and driver combined must weigh less than 300 pounds, the YSU group plans to use team captain Lisko, the smallest in stature, as this year's driver. For the competition, he will be encased in a coffin-like Plexiglas roof cov-

ering the vehicle, which will protect him as he drives the 5/8-mile test course.

He will drive nine miles along the track at the vehicle's traveling speed of 15 to 20 miles per hour, and a group of judges will assess how much fuel has been consumed along the way. Although the team is shooting for a 1,000-mpg or better run, it will have to far exceed its expectations to compete with the 20 or more other teams from around the world. Last year's winning team was Canada's Universite Laval, which posted a 3,169-mpg run.

Although YSU has competed in the Supermileage competitions for nearly 10 years, Suchora said he has high hopes for this year's squad.

"We really have a competitive vehicle," he said.

The team hopes to have the vehicle complete for the engineering design day in April, during which seniors display their senior projects. ■

Story by Britta Snowberger

Baseball, softball games now on Internet

Penguins fans can now listen to YSU baseball and softball home games via free Internet-radio broadcasts.

The athletics department began producing the broadcasts on March 17 when the YSU baseball team opened the 2009 home season at Eastwood Field against the Pittsburgh Panthers.

In all, a total of 20 baseball and 13 softball games will be broadcast throughout the season.

Broadcasts can be found on the online home for YSU athletics, www.YSU-sports.com.

YSU baseball is broadcast through the Horizon League Network. Penguin softball is streamed

online through TeamLine, also free of charge. Ryan Gasser of Hubbard, an intern in the YSU sports information office from Bowling Green State University, is the play-by-play commentator.

In the fall, YSU carries video-streaming of home volleyball and soccer games. The department also video-streams and audio broadcasts YSU football and men's and women's basketball via the Internet. ■



Jeremy Banks gets ready to make the tag at first base during the Penguins' season opener at Eastwood Field.

Marketing

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provide intelligence and initial recommendations to begin the development of a sound brand strategy for the university that connects with the needs and aspirations of today's students, while further cultivating benefactor and community support, he said.

Researchers from Simpson-Scarborough completed a three-day campus visit in March, during which they conducted more than 70 face-to-face interviews with students, faculty, staff and university leaders. The firm's researchers will also conduct a quantitative study through 60 in-depth telephone interviews with prospective students and alumni, he said.

In June, they will return to campus to present the analysis findings, qualitative research summary and make recommendations for an in-depth quantitative research study that will provide important data and benchmarking to help guide and assess university communications and marketing as YSU transforms and grows in the years ahead. ■