

History prof appointed dean of arts & behavioral sciences

The College of Arts & Behavioral Sciences will remain in familiar hands as the University announced Dec. 12 that Mary Hedberg has been selected as dean. Hedberg has been serving in the role in an interim capacity for a year and a half since Donald Bachand left the post to become vice president for academic affairs. Her appointment is effective immediately and follows two nationwide searches over the past two years.

"This is a strong college and I'm lucky to be here," Hedberg said. "I want to build on its strong foundation



Mary Hedberg

and increase the marketability of our graduates through expanded internships and other outreach."

With 13 academic

departments and nearly 130 full-time faculty members, ABS is the largest of SVSU's five colleges; Hedberg intends to explore opportunities for additional resources and support initiatives in key areas.

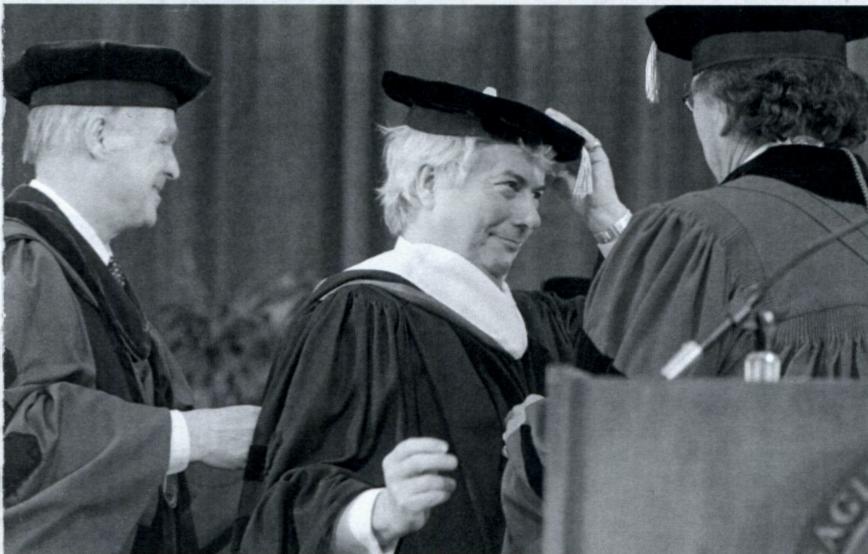
Hedberg joined the SVSU faculty in 1993 and taught in the history department for nine years — including four years as department chair — before moving to academic administration in 2002 when she became the assistant vice president for academic affairs. While in that post, she coordinated SVSU's self-study report for the Higher Learning Commission.

In 2004, Hedberg was promoted to associate vice president for academic planning and assessment. Her duties included serving as chair of the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee and the Graduate Committee.

Hedberg is the principal investigator for a three-year grant of \$431,000 from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, which serves to provide digital portfolio components, as well as seminars and workshops to increase SVSU's graduation rate among academically and/or economically disadvantaged students. It follows a similar grant of \$350,000 issued in 2003.

Outside of SVSU, Hedberg serves as a consultant-evaluator, reviewing other institutions' accreditation for the Higher Learning Commission. She also represents SVSU for the American Council on Education's Women in Leadership in Higher Education initiative.

A resident of Midland, Hedberg completed her Ph.D. in history at the University of Minnesota with an emphasis on Latin America.



Best-selling author Ken Follett was the recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Letters and addressed graduates at Commencement exercises Friday, Dec. 14. President Eric Gilbertson, left, and David Gamez, chair of the Board of Control, participated in the hooding ceremony. Follett, whose archives are housed in Zahnow Library, is the author of more than a dozen best-selling books spanning three decades. (Photo by Matthew Shaw)

2007 STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS

President Eric R. Gilbertson will deliver his
"State of the University Address"
at 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24, 2008, in the
Malcolm Field Theatre for Performing Arts

A reception will follow the address

Arif Sultan

Assistant Professor of Economics

Arif Sultan recalls his early impressions of SVSU. "The campus is so beautiful," he said.

Some of that beauty is now covered by snow and ice, and the Pakistani native admits that winter "is a big change" for him, but he does not dread the impending Michigan season, because he knows it will be much milder than at his previous post, Nova Scotia.

Having completed his first semester here, Sultan is also struck by how academic units are clustered together.

"One thing that is amazing to me is that most of the colleges are in the same building," he said. "That gives me more interaction within the department and a greater chance for interdisciplinary research."

With a background in health economics, one of Sultan's areas of scholarly emphasis is obesity, especially among children.

While most research has centered on the topic as a health issue, there are economic ramifications, too.

"My interest is from the labor perspective," he said. "If both parents work, does it affect children's obesity?"

Sultan says that while two incomes may allow families to buy healthier foods, working parents often have less time to spend with their children, leading to less physical activity.

He also is curious as to whether a mother's quick return to the workforce after delivery correlates with overweight children.

Sultan is studying data from the U.S. and Canada, and his findings could be of considerable interest to employers.

"When obese children go into the labor force, their productivity would probably be less than healthier children. It also could have an effect on health care expenditures."

Sultan says there has not been much research in these areas and he hopes his findings will provide useful information to influence policymakers.

He has been influenced by his new colleagues at SVSU.

"They are very professional and they are very generous toward the new faculty, giving the guidance we need."

Sultan has plans to introduce a health economics course to the MBA program. He is also impressed with what he has seen in the classroom, saying "the average level of student performance is good," compared to other schools where he has taught, including Wayne State.

Sultan also has a scholarly interest in vehicles that are "lemons," explaining that the market "won't work properly" when sellers fail to fully disclose problems to buyers. Close proximity to the major automakers is one more reason why he is "very happy I got a chance to come back to Michigan."



Sam Heikinen

Director of International Admissions, Coordinator of International Recruitment • Dec. 2007

Growing up in Michigan's upper peninsula and having spent five years living in one of China's less populated provinces, Sam Heikinen has seen some of the world's more remote outposts. It also gives him a valuable perspective when talking to international students about attending SVSU.

"The Midwest is a tough sell," he acknowledged, but the pitch works in Mandarin — which Heikinen speaks fluently — as more than 50 Chinese students are taking classes this term, up from a handful last year. Their emphasis on schoolwork often makes quite an impression on their American counterparts.

"In China when you are a young person, your job is to study," Heikinen explained.

That voracious appetite for education extends to language.

"There are more students in China learning English than there are native English speakers in the world," Heikinen said, adding that he admires what SVSU's international students are able to accomplish.

"Some of them just humble me. They have so much ambition, so much motivation. They've worked so hard to get where they've gotten. What we give them is an American education they have to work hard to earn. They then return to that country with that education and a friendship toward America."

Heikinen sees a glimpse of this nation's past in their present. "To me," he said, "they embody the spirit that many of our ancestors had. They're young, bold risk-takers and they're making a tremendously difficult journey."

Heikinen says international students are attracted by many of the same features as traditional U.S. students, such as small class sizes, personal attention and a safe environment that is conducive to learning. And Asian parents play a large role in the decision-making process, even more than the so-called "helicopter parents" of modern America.

Heikinen points out that "international education is the fifth largest export commodity in the United States," but he is particularly grateful for one import — his wife. He and Yang Liu were teachers and coaches for their schools' debate teams when they met in China. "I let her team win," he joked.

Heikinen "loves" his job more than he thought he would and sees a strong team in the International Programs office.

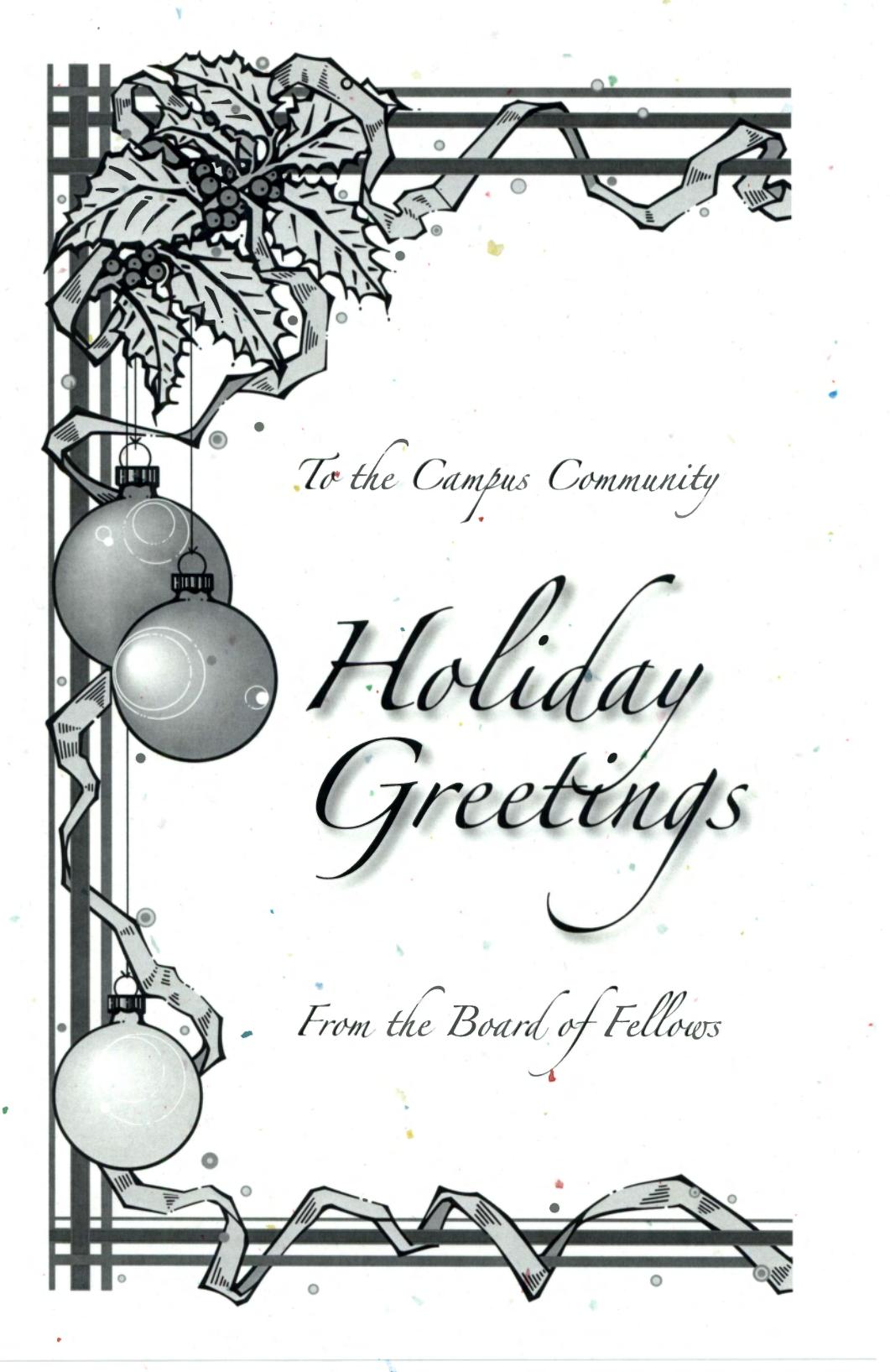
"I feed off the energy," he said.

He needs it to fuel the three months a year he spends traveling abroad, which can be arduous but he sees as an essential duty.

"A university is not a university unless it has international diversity."



Heikinen on the mic at the Sino-U.S. Education Forum in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China which is one of about 20 places he recruits students in China.



To the Campus Community

Holiday Greetings

From the Board of Fellows

Professional Profile

• **Scott Julian**, associate professor of marketing and management, and **Joseph Ofori-Dankwa**, professor of marketing and management, co-authored (along with Bob Justis at LSU) a research paper titled "Understanding Strategic Responses to Interest Group Pressures" that has been accepted for publication in *Strategic Management Journal*.

• **Michael R. Mosher**, associate professor of art/communication & digital media design, and Noriko Uosaki of Shikoku University Department of English Language & Culture, co-published *World Popular Songs: From Chuck Berry to Eminem*, (Shohakusha Publications, Tokyo). The book uses song lyrics, explanatory essays and exercises to teach English comprehension, and contains 15 caricatures by Mosher. The book grew out of Mosher's experience with Japanese students of English when he was on a faculty exchange at Shikoku University in 2002.

• **Altaf Rahman**, professor of electrical and computer engineering, represented SVSU and its engineering programs at the annual Michigan Engineering Colleges/Community College Liaison Committee (MEC/CCLC) meeting held Oct. 19 at Schoolcraft College in Livonia. The organization now renamed as MECCCA (Michigan Engineering College Community College Association), discussed enrollment, trends, course offerings at different community colleges, course content, prerequisites, and transferability of courses from community colleges to four-year engineering programs in the state of Michigan.

Also, Rahman attended the 40th annual Frontiers of Power Conference Oct. 29-30, sponsored by the Engineering Energy Laboratory and School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Oklahoma State University. Rahman participated in the discussion on different renewable energy sources, protection of wind farms, and optimal operation of power system equipment to enhance the security of power supply by the electric utility industry.

And Rahman attended the "YES! Expo" at Ford Field in Detroit Nov. 8, along with **Sabrina Costilla**, assistant director of admissions. "YES! Expo" invites about 18,000 high school students to Ford Field to view different university and college exhibits, industry exhibits and attend featured lectures given by Steven Squyres, scientific principal investigator, Mars Exploration Rover Project, to generate student interest in science, engineering and technology. Some 600 high school seniors visited the SVSU booth to learn about SVSU's engineering programs.

• **Stephen Taber**, associate professor of biology, is contracting with Texas Tech University Press to publish the finished manuscript of *Plants of Central Texas Wetlands*. The book's appearance is expected in spring or summer 2008.

New Cardinals

• **Cheryl Brow**, administrative secretary, career planning and placement, had a girl, Ella Rose (6 lbs., 8 oz., 18.5 in.), Nov. 30.

Condolences

• To **Dawn Gillespie**, administrative secretary, school and university partnerships, on the loss of her father, John Fogarasi.
• To **Debbie Marsh**, administrative assistant to the executive assistant to the president, whose father, Ben Nowak, passed away Nov. 21.
• To the family of Gregory Schisler, a student who passed away Nov. 17.

Briefly Speaking

• When shopping for the holidays, consider a Red Pride package. For only \$20, each package includes a T-shirt, set of pom pons, license plate, sports bottle with coupon for one free fill up, window cling and two coupons for general admission to a home basketball game during the 2007-08 season. Contact Shelly Reminder at ext. 7306 to make a purchase.

• The SVSU Foundation Office is accepting proposals from faculty and staff for SVSU Foundation Resource Grants through Friday, Feb. 1. These grants may be used for projects that directly involve and benefit SVSU students. (Funds are generally available within 30 days of the application deadline.) To obtain an electronic copy of the guidelines and application materials, visit the new Resource Grant Web site at www.svsu.edu/foundation/grants. For more information, contact Emmie Busch at ext. 7025, or e-mail busch@svsu.edu.

Students demonstrate outstanding research and creativity

SVSU students are undertaking ambitious projects to build autonomous vehicles and self-playing guitars, and to research topics such as aircraft crashes and college anxiety. In all, seven projects involving 10 students have been selected to receive funding through SVSU's Student Research and Creativity Institute.

Any SVSU student may submit a proposal to receive financial support for his/her research or other creative endeavors. Each student project is eligible to receive up to \$10,000. All student submissions must be sponsored by an SVSU faculty or staff member. Students serve as the primary researcher, author, or creative agent for each project but are guided by SVSU faculty and staff.

The following students were selected to receive funding for their projects:

- Madison Bangert, a biology/pre-med major, was awarded \$1,533 to travel to a joint conference of the American Culture and Popular Culture associations where she will present her analysis of gender roles in the postfeminist film *Shaun of the Dead*. The conference will be held in San Francisco in March 2008.
- Electrical engineering major Ryan Essenmacher will receive \$8,336 to lead a team of students in developing an autonomous vehicle for competition at the Intelligent Ground Vehicle Competition at Oakland University in May 2008.
- Nathan Hepworth, a history major, was awarded \$1,489 to travel to the British Museum Library to study original documents and further his research on Irish-English relations.
- Psychology majors Kaitlin Herzog and Ashley Schafer will receive \$950 for travel to the Midwestern Psychology Association conference to present their research on the role of coping strategies on stress and academic engagement.
- A team of three electrical engineering students from Ontario was awarded \$6,524 to develop a self-playing acoustic guitar. Kevin Moore, Sasha Lucic and Andrew Cairns intend to create a prototype that will use mechanical and electrical circuitry to manipulate the guitar while writing computer programs to tell the instrument what to play.
- Steve Richey will receive \$9,700 to study reports of fatal private aircraft crashes in the U.S. and compile a database in a readily accessible format for researchers to answer questions regarding the causes, circumstances or effects of crashes.
- Joshua Urbain, a computer science major, was awarded \$6,482 for his research study on artificial intelligence and distributed computing, which uses the processing power of multiple computers to work on complex tasks.

The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU. University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

Tim Inman

Director of Creative Services
tmi@svsu.edu • (989) 964-4086

J.J. Boehm

Director of Media Relations
jboehm@svsu.edu • (989) 964-4055

Submission Deadline:
Noon on Wednesday before the publication date.
Please send items by e-mail to: tmi@svsu.edu.