



The red carpet will be rolled out at the Alumni Celebration in Curtiss Hall Saturday, Nov. 6, as SVSU recognizes recipients of the 2010 Distinguished and Outstanding Alumni Awards. Six honorees will receive achievement awards at the 7:30 p.m. ceremony, which immediately follows a reception at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. The evening's entertainment features SVSU students portraying scenes from the theatre production *A Street Car Named Desire*, along with musical selections performed by the Cardinal Singers. Call the Alumni Office at ext. 7462 for ticket information. Net proceeds benefit SVSU students through the Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship Fund.

## Enjoy an entertaining evening and meet these honored alumni:



**Distinguished Alumnus**  
**Francisco "Poncho" Itzaina**  
B.A., 1971  
Regional Director –  
South America,  
Rolls-Royce International



**College of Arts  
& Behavioral Sciences**  
**Outstanding Alumnus**  
**Billy Dexter**  
B.A., 1984  
Partner,  
Heidrick & Struggles



**College of Business  
& Management**  
**Outstanding Alumnus**  
**Robert Stafford**  
B.B.A., 1985  
1st Vice-President,  
Business Development,  
Chemical Bank



**College of Education**  
**Outstanding Alumnus**  
**Steven Zott**  
B.A., 1981  
Superintendent of Schools,  
Almont Community Schools



**College of Science,  
Engineering & Technology**  
**Outstanding Alumna**  
**Dr. Catherine Baase**  
B.S., 1977  
Global Director  
of Health Services,  
The Dow Chemical Company



**College of Health  
& Human Services**  
**Outstanding Alumnus**  
**Richard Herm**  
B.S., 1977, B.S.N., 1981,  
M.S.N., 2004  
Clinical Research Specialist,  
St. Mary's of Michigan and  
President, Herm & Associates

# John Baesler

## Assistant Professor of History

The Cold War is “ancient history” to John Baesler’s students. It is deeply personal history to him, as his father and other family members fled East Germany to escape Communism. His grandparents escaped the week before the Berlin Wall was built.

“I have a lot of family connection to Communism and I come from the idea that America handled its obligations much more democratically than the Soviet Union. U.S. history and U.S. foreign relations, that’s what my interest is,” he said.

In his second year at SVSU, Baesler has taught a course on the history of the CIA and is in the process of adapting his dissertation topic, the use of the lie detector by the U.S. for national security purposes, into a book.

“I try to understand how does a society balance its commitment to freedom with the perception that there is danger out there.”

Baesler was exposed to American culture long before he set foot on American soil. His native region in southwest Germany has multiple U.S. military bases, and his father taught high school in Wisconsin for a year.

“We always had English at home, and I always had the Americans around me,” Baesler recalled. “I would listen to American Armed Forces Radio as a teenager. That was the best radio station,” he said with a laugh and nod toward “Rick Dees Top 40” and other programs.

After completing most of his studies in Germany, Baesler finished his Ph.D. at Indiana University.

“The German academic job market is really terrible,” he said, so with his American wife, Jennifer Stinson, they settled in Michigan, and he is happy with the decision.

“I think SVSU grows on you. When you get to know the people, you find out it’s a really friendly place. The biggest strength is that it’s a ‘first name’ campus.”

Baesler enjoys the rich discussions of modern history with his students.

“The current generation of students grew up with 9-11 and would consider that their defining experience,” he said. “For me, the fall of the Berlin Wall is the defining experience.

“I don’t envy them. They have to figure out this complicated world where America does enjoy freedom, but there is no consensus over what to do. Cold War historians like to talk about that there was a basic consensus that America was doing the right thing.”

“The media don’t make it easy for them, either. Everything is boiled down to a slogan. I tell them, ‘If you learn one thing at the university, it’s that there is never just one slogan that explains something.’”



# Matt Giddings

## Web Programmer • September 2010

How many strands are there in a spider web? Chances are you've never thought much about it and once you do, you realize the web is more intricate and complex than you originally imagined. The same is true for the World Wide Web.

"A person sees one page, but they don't realize what's going on behind it," said Matt Giddings, whose primary responsibility lies behind what you see on your screen.

Building a Web page can take "months," Giddings explained. "It's a community project. Each department has their own content that they maintain," and Web Communications collaborates with him on pages that are marketing-driven.

Giddings employs a variety of programming languages and software tools in his daily activities and describes his job as "a love-hate-love relationship. I like that it's continuously changing, but you're constantly trying to keep up with the technology."

In his present job for more than two years and at SVSU for seven, Giddings finds satisfaction in learning how to use new technology, but occasionally advances create unanticipated problems. When SVSU debuted its new Web site, for example, it was not designed for a version of Internet Explorer that was two generations old and no longer supported by Microsoft.

Giddings soon learned "organizations such as the U.S. Navy

and the Saginaw School District were still using it." Since SVSU has students and employees in each, extensive troubleshooting was required to make the new site compatible with the dated software. "We have to think about all of the clients," he said.

To put work thoughts behind him, Giddings likes to hop on his motorcycle, especially in Michigan's Thumb.

"I like riding in non-wooded areas, open fields, on a nice warm, sunny day."

Giddings professes an "obscure" taste in music and recently resumed playing the guitar after a three-year hiatus.

Changes are ahead for Web users. New programming languages, such as HTML 5, are currently in development, and Giddings says they promise to offer improved "client-side storage" that periodically would save what you input, making it easier to complete online forms and perform various tasks. Other changes will be noticed, too.

"A lot more user interaction," he said. "The biggest things are embedded video and embedded audio, so browsing should be more efficient."

Despite the never-ending struggle to stay current in a rapidly changing field, Giddings is happy with his career choice.

"I really do enjoy my job. I mean it when I say that."



## Professional Profile

- **Mohammad Saad Alam**, assistant professor of electrical & computer engineering, has been selected for inclusion in Montclair “Who’s Who in Collegiate Faculty” for 2011.
- **Marty Arford**, associate professor of geography, received a research grant from the Rocky Mountain Biological Lab in Crested Butte, Colo., to help cover expenses of conducting pollen field work, which was part of a larger research project titled “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function: Pollinator Diversity, Specialization and Plant Reproductive Success.”
- **Geoffrey V. Carter**, assistant professor of rhetoric & professional writing, co-edited 11 articles titled “Video and Participatory Cultures: Writing, Rhetoric, Performance, and The Tube” for *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*; and he published a webtext with **Bill Williamson**, associate professor of rhetoric & professional writing, titled “Diogenes, Dogfaced Soldiers, and Deployment Videos” for *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*.
- **Donald Earley**, associate professor of occupational therapy, **Ellen Herlache**, research coordinator, and Dana Skelton, SVSU MSOT alumna, published an article titled “Use of occupations and activities in a modified constraint-induced movement therapy program: A musician’s triumphs over chronic hemiparesis from stroke” in the September/October 2010 issue of the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*.
- **Said Elfakhani**, Harvey Randall Wickes Endowed Chair in International Business, published an article titled “Intertemporal Test of Beta Stationarity Performance of Islamic Sector Structured Mutual Funds” in the *Journal of International Business & Entrepreneurship Development*; he also published “An Examination of the Interrelationship between Arab Markets and Economic Indicators” in the *Middle-East Journal of Business*. Also, Elfakhani’s article titled “Determinants of FDI in Emerging Markets: The Case of Brazil, China and India” was included in the Proceedings of the SAICON 2010-Academy of Global Business Advancement South Asia Chapter’s Second International conference, July 2010.
- **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, has an article titled “Nineteenth-Century African American Literature and the ‘New Regionalism’” in the current issue of **Literature Compass**.
- **Sara Beth Keough**, assistant professor of geography, had an article titled “The Wenhai Ecolodge: A case study of culture and environment in Southwest China” published in the Summer 2010 edition of *Focus on Geography*, a peer-reviewed journal.
- **George M. Puia**, Dow Chemical Company Centennial Chair in Global Business, published an article titled “Entrepreneurial Need for Achievement in China, Latvia, and the USA” in the *Baltic Journal of Management* (the paper also was presented last year at a conference in Lithuania).

## New Cardinals

- **Wissem Bennani**, international student advisor, announced the birth of a son, Mohammed (7.4 lbs., 21.5 in.), August 28.
- **Jean Prast**, OT fieldwork coordinator, announced the birth of her son, Sawyer Reid (9 lbs., 12 oz., 21 in.), Sept. 9.

## Condolences

- To **Nanette Fein**, programmer/analyst, whose mother-in-law, Ruth Fein, passed away Oct. 16.
- To **Marlin Frey**, maintenance, whose mother, Francis Frey, passed away Sept. 27.
- To **William Portmann**, locksmith, whose father-in-law, Robert D. Hanes, director of engineering services emeritus, passed away Oct. 5. During his 25-year career at SVSU, Hanes supervised 15 campus construction projects, including Cardinal Gymnasium, Wickes Hall and Zahnow Library.

- To **Drew Hinderer**, Finkbeiner Endowed Chair in Ethics, whose father, Roger E. Hinderer, passed away Sept. 25.
- To **Robert Mackie**, mechanical engineering lab technician, whose mother-in-law, Alice Mae Garnsey, passed away Oct. 5.

## Transitions

### Newly Hired:

- Jerry Boehm, Instructor-One Semester
- Steven Farver, Resident Director-Living Center North
- Kelly Jo Gartland, Resident Director-Pine Grove
- Kait Harris, Assistant Volleyball Coach
- Brent Headquist, Lecturer of Geography
- Kenneth Kearns, Assistant Professor of Chemistry
- Charise Lindsay, Assistant Professor of Music
- David Lutenski, Compliance/ Special Projects Assistant
- Annette Militello, Basic Skills Math Coordinator
- J.Brent Morrison, Event & Theatre Technology Specialist
- Lynn Richard, Transcript/Counter Clerk
- Timothy Rousee, Assistant Softball Coach
- Emilia Rsiezniak, International Guest Scholar
- Philippe Saratsiotis, Professional Mathematics Tutor
- Felicia Seals-Buchanan, Assistant Volleyball Coach
- Angie Stepsis, Assistant Director of Admissions
- Samuel Tilmon, Assistant Director of Career Services
- Vetta Vratulis, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education

### Reappointed:

- Sahar Al-Masri, Sponsored International Student Advisor
- Erica Barnes, Academic Advisor
- Maryann Gillette, Faculty Secretary
- Janna Kern, Study Abroad Coordinator
- Mary Kowaleski, Administrative Assistant to the President
- Nancy Pockrandt, Outreach Coordinator
- Mark Potts Special Assistant to the Provost
- Matthew Quintano, Custodian
- Adrian Thomas, Assistant Men’s and Women’s Soccer Coach

### Retiring:

- Janet Rubin, Professor of Theatre
- Jo Stanley, Administrative Assistant to the President

### Leaving:

- Mark Clauser, Event Technology Specialist
- Mark Clevey, Director of Entrepreneurship & Commercialization (CBED)
- Danielle Lavigne, Assistant Laboratory Technician
- Greta Baksa, Administrative Assistant of Institutional Research
- Jeremy Bockelman, Assistant Director of Career Services
- Jacquelin Herlache, Basic Skills Coordinator
- Brei Noble, Assistant Director of Admissions

### Title Change:

- Julie Decker, Manager of Post Awards & Grants & IRB
- Janet Rentsch, Director of Sponsored Programs & IRB Research Compliance
- Linda Schmidt, Administrative Assistant to the VP for Enrollment Management

### Directory Changes

- Amy Pierce, B318
- International Programs, W250
- Math Resource/Support Center, Z202A
- Valley Vanguard, ext. 4482
- Yang Liu, yangliu@svsu.edu

**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.

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### Submission Deadline:

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