

Students receive awards, region reaps rewards

Students are the lifeblood of any university. SVSU students circulate throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region through their studies and their volunteer service, learning as they improve the quality of life for regional residents. Increasingly these students are gaining notice for their efforts.

During the 2009-10 academic year, more than 1,850 students were placed in Bay, Midland and Saginaw county schools, businesses, and service agencies as part of their academic preparation. The occupational therapy program received the 2010 Bernice Barlow Community Partnership Award from the Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority.

The athletic department received acclaim for its Community Youth Day program, where coaches and student-athletes provide free clinics for local children (535 in 2009-10), winning the NACMA/Division II Community Engagement Award of Excellence last year. SVSU was one of just 18 recipients nationwide.

*"Students who volunteer gain a new perspective
... It teaches them how to be a global citizen and
help with an international crisis."*

Katrina Phillips

Associate Director of Student Life

Most recently, the Student Life Center was honored March 22 at "Y Celebration 2011" for its partnership with the Saginaw YMCA's youth program. Some 65 students worked with the YMCA during Make A Difference Day and at its annual Halloween event.

"It's important to attract students to volunteer projects such as these," said Katrina

Phillips, associate director of Student Life, who represented SVSU at the ceremony. "A better, more well-rounded college experience is not just class work, it's going out there and doing things, being active by volunteering at churches or in the community."

While concentrated regionally, SVSU students direct their efforts internationally at

times, as well. During the week of March 21, several groups combined to host fundraising activities for Japanese relief efforts, following the massive earthquake that rocked that nation March 11. Student Association and others also will raise funds to combat cancer during the annual Relay for Life from 6 p.m. Friday, April 8 to 6 a.m. Saturday, April 9.

"Students who volunteer gain a new perspective," Phillips added. "It teaches them how to be a global citizen and help with an international crisis such as the earthquake in Japan, and also see the need to have a focus of how we can each help in our own communities."

SVSU students participate in various community service activities, including raising funds for Japan relief efforts, right, and partnering with the YMCA's Make a Difference Day, below.



22nd Annual
All-University
AWARDS BANQUET

Friday, April 15

Curtiss Hall Banquet Rooms

Reception 5:45 p.m.

Dinner 6:45 p.m.

Awards Program 7:45 p.m.

Door Prize Drawing 9:00 p.m.

PLEASE RSVP

BY APRIL 1

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Kim Davis

Assistant Professor of English

Kim Davis is in her first year on a new job. That means writing new syllabi, teaching new courses, becoming acquainted with new surroundings, new colleagues and new students, and she commutes more than an hour each way every day. And she wouldn't have it any other way. "I'm having fun," she says with a smile. "It's been a honeymoon."

Davis gives every impression that it will be a lasting relationship. "It feels like the right place for me," she said. "Our English department is terrific; we work well together. I'm happy to come to work."

After graduating with bachelor's degrees in economics and English, Davis went to work in corporate America and quickly migrated to marketing where she coupled her writing skills with her understanding of numbers. She didn't recognize it at the time, but she was preparing for her second career. "I found myself continually correcting other people's work," Davis recalled.

Her husband, Fred, works for Chrysler and was transferred to Michigan, leading Davis to graduate school, knowing she wanted to eventually work for a teaching institution. "I had that goal in mind before I took my first class."

At SVSU, Davis is teaching introductory writing courses, including a creative non-fiction course where a recent assignment involved students interviewing someone over age 65.

"Here's an individual who's experienced a number of phenomena," Davis explained. "What does this person's literacy story tell me?"

Students are given freedom to choose their interview subject. "You write more if you are engaged with something, if you connect with it," she said. "I want them to see themselves as writers."

While immersed in academia, Davis draws upon her corporate background to help skeptical students see the value of good writing.

"It's easier to explain to them that English matters. Students tend to be pragmatic. They came to college to get an education to get a job. If you look at job postings, most of them say 'communicates well.' The ability to do that takes you far. It's usually the person who communicates well who moves up the ladder."

Those conversations are further evidence for Davis that she is where she is supposed to be.

"How many people have the opportunity to change fields and hit the right one? To say, 'this is me.' I've had the life where it was about me. It was about my goals, my aspirations, what I wanted out of life. To me, this is a window to just give back. Teaching writing is all about giving back and seeing that 'light bulb' moment with students."



Angela Bublitz

Assistant Supervisor, Graphics Center • March 2011

"My job is to make the university look good." That's how Angela Bublitz succinctly states what she does on a daily basis in SVSU's Graphics Center, printing items ranging from simple business cards to complex documents. She knows whatever the task, the finished product is a reflection on the institution as a whole.

No two projects – or workdays – are the same.

"Every day is different, which is awesome. It's one of my favorite things about the job. It makes the day go by faster."

While the pace is rarely slow – "I'm never at a lack of things to do," Bublitz said – there are intervals where it accelerates. "The beginning of the semester and the end of the semester are usually out of control," she said.

Regardless of volume, Bublitz agonizes over the smallest detail, such as a misplaced margin. Once an aspiring teacher, she learned that fastidiousness during her student internship at the Graphics Center.

"I had a good time," she recalled. So good, in fact, that it ultimately led to her current position, which she began in October 2007. After a few months, Bublitz found it hard to believe that her boss, Perry Toyzan, had handled the duties singlehandedly for so many years. When he recently took a six-week leave of absence, leaving Bublitz in charge, she had a chance to experience that for herself.

"It was kind of a blur," Bublitz said, but she responded well. "I surprised myself a little bit," she conceded. "I had a lot of help, and everybody was so understanding. I was glad for him to come back and say, 'See, everything is fine.' It was a good feeling to know I pulled it off."

But Bublitz was happy to return the reins to her mentor. "He's awesome. We work really well together."

When she's not working, Bublitz is usually reading Dr. Seuss or watching Mickey Mouse with her children, Hayley, 6, or Cole, 2. "I love being a mom." Occasionally she finds time to watch a "grown-up show" such as American Idol, and lists reading as her preferred pastime.

In her work, Bublitz employs imagination as well as technical expertise. "I'm always trying to think, 'How did they want this to look?' I can make things exactly the way people wanted it, even if they didn't know that's how they wanted it."

The finished products become sources of pride.

"I'm part of stuff. I can walk around campus and say, 'We did that poster. We printed that picture.' It's a really neat feeling of accomplishment and belonging."



Professional Profile

• **Mohammad Saad Alam**, assistant professor of electrical & computer engineering, and his fall 2010 Solar Photovoltaic Systems students, presented at the 2011 Michigan Academy of Science & Letters Conference held at SVSU March 11. The six presentations were titled/presented by: “Solar Powered Charging Station for Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles at Saginaw Valley State University,” Vishal Parimoo, Curt Chalabian, Joseph Nitz and Alam; “Feasibility of Off-Grid Residential Photovoltaic System Utilizing Hydrogen Storage,” Bryant Barnes, Jamey Hackel, Abdulmajed Alqhtani and Alam; “Residential versus Large-scale Feasibility of Solar Panel Installation,” Kayla Cieszlak, Alan Malott, Matt McClelland and Alam; “Interconnection of Photovoltaic Modules with the Grid for the Al-Khaif Mosque at Mina in Saudi Arabia,” Anwar Ashalan, Ali Alghafly, Faisal Alrfaj and Alam; “Solar Powered Water Pump for use in Remote Areas,” Faisal Alshalan, Bender Almarjan, David Armstrong and Alam; and “Design of a Photovoltaic Array for the Power and Energy Demand of Founders Hall at SVSU,” Matthew Spreeman, Hillary Jacobs, Matthew Plachta and Alam.

• **Lilianna Aniola-Jedrzejek**, visiting international professor from Poznan University of Technology in Poland, and **Diane Boehm**, university writing program director, presented “A Template for Self-Analysis of Common Errors in English that Occur with Speakers of Polish” (adaptable for other languages) at the 4th International Conference on Writing Research at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., Feb. 18.

• **Said Elfakhani**, Harvey R. Wickes Chair in International Business, co-authored a paper with S. Chahine and M. Omecihe titled “A Comparative Study of the Performance of Islamic and Conventional Banks: Evidence from the Middle East Region” that will be presented at the Eastern Finance Association Conference in Sannah, Ga., April 13-16. Elfakhani will also be chairing a session at the conference.

Also, Elfakhani co-authored a paper with **Wayne Mackie**, professor of finance, titled “The Determinants of FDIs in BRIC Countries” that will be presented at the third annual Global Management Conference, May 4-7, in Godollo/Budapest, Hungary.

• **Kaustav Misra**, assistant professor of economics, recently had several scholarly articles accepted for publication/presentation, including: “The Effects of Community Social Capital on School Performance: A Spatial Approach,” and “Determinants of Firm Formation: An International Perspective” (co-authored with

Shyamalendu Sarkar, professor of economics) at the Western Economic Association International 86th Annual Conference, San Diego, Calif.; “The Propensity to Use Nonfamily Managers’ Incentive Compensation in Family Firms” (co-authored with E. Memili, J. Chrisman and E.P.C. Chang) and “Entrepreneurship Capital in American Counties: A Panel Data Analysis” (co-authored with E.P.C. Chang and E. Memili) at the Academy of Management Meeting, San Antonio, Texas; “The Link Between Corporate Governance, Family Involvement and Firm Performance” (co-authored with E. Memili and J. Chrisman) at the Family Enterprise

Research Conference, Grand Rapids, Mich.; “An Empirical Analysis of the Antecedents of Nonfamily Managers’ Incentive Compensation in Family Firms” (co-authored with E. Memili, J. Chrisman and E.P.C. Chang) at the United States Association for Small Business & Entrepreneurship Meeting, Hilton Head, S.C.; and “Does Competition Improve Public School Efficiency? An Analysis of K-12 Public Education in Mississippi” at the American Economic Association Conference, Denver, Colo.

• **Shyamalendu Sarkar**, professor of economics, had two articles published recently in business journals; the papers were titled “A Study of the Environmental Issues Associated with the Dominican Republic—Central American Free Trade Agreement” and “The Role of Macroeconomics in Effective Decision-making.”

• **Stephen Taber**, associate professor of biology, had a manuscript titled “Two Parasites of the Green Lacewing Chrysopa chi Fitch (Neuroptera: Chrysopidae): One Species Known and One Species Unidentified” accepted for publication in The Southwestern Entomologist.

New Cardinals

• **Tim Patterson**, senior systems administrator, announced the birth of a daughter, Molly Marie (6 lbs., 1 oz.), March 5.

Condolences

- To **George Puia**, associate dean of the College of Business & Management/Dow Chemical Company Centennial Chair in Global Business, whose mother, Grace Puia, passed away March 13.
- To **Heather Sanders**, linux system administrator, whose father, Oscar “Frank” Sanders Jr., passed away March 11.
- To the family of **Harriet E. Tillock**, professor emerita of sociology (1973-2000), who passed away March 5.
- To **Gardner Umbarger**, associate professor of teacher education, whose mother, Ann Sweeny, passed away Feb. 23.

Briefly Speaking

- Faculty and staff may present the alumni scroll to graduating members of their immediate family during the Commencement ceremony at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, May 7. To make arrangements, call ext. 4051.

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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