

Champs!

For the first time since joining NCAA Division II, the men's and women's basketball teams both advanced to the postseason in the same year.

The men's team — which finished with a 25-8 overall record — claimed the GLIAC North Division Championship and were crowned GLIAC Regular Season Co-Champions as well.

The league title is the program's first since the 1984-85 season and fourth overall.

After three victories in the NCAA Division II Tournament and the program's first-ever Midwest Regional Championship, the Cardinals traveled to Frisco, Texas, in March to compete as one of the final eight teams in the Elite Eight. The Cardinals ultimately lost to Western Oregon, 81-68.

The SVSU women's team posted a 22-9 overall record, finishing first in the GLIAC North Division.

This marked a first for the program in the 20 years the league has crowned division winners.

SVSU found itself in the NCAA postseason for the first time in 23 years. After an opening-round victory over Ballarmine, 69-58. The Cardinals lost to Grand Valley in the quarterfinals, 63-56.

The men's team saw three players eclipse the 1,000-point career mark this season. C.J. Turnage, a health science major from Ypsilanti, was named to

the All-GLIAC First Team as well as the NABC All-District First Team and All-Region Second Team; Damon Bozeman, a health science major from



Emily Wendling surpassed 1,000 points scored in her career and made national headlines for her play during the season.

Detroit, was named to both the All-GLIAC First Team and All-Defensive Team; and Garrett Hall, a communication major from Indianapolis, was named to the All-GLIAC First Team.

Kellen Smith, a criminal justice major from Covington, Kentucky, also became the school's all-time assist leader, totaling 546 for his four-year career.

Randy Baruth was named men's GLIAC Coach of the Year.

On the women's team, Emily Wendling made national headlines for her play on the court.

The occupational therapy major from Flushing reached the 1,000-point plateau, was named the Division II Midwest Region Player of the Year, GLIAC Player of the Year, second team All-American, GLIAC North Player of the Week (five times) and U.S. Basketball Writers Association Division II Player of the Week. She was named to the CoSIDA Academic All-America second team.

Halee Nieman, a pre-social work major from Freeland, was named GLIAC Freshman of the Year.

Katelyn Carriere, an exercise science major from London, Ontario, was named second team All-GLIAC.



The men's team advanced to the Elite Eight NCAA-II National Tournament in Frisco, Texas, where they were up-ended by No. 3-seeded Western Oregon, 81-68.

Rajani Muraleedharan

Assistant Professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering

Rajani Muraleedharan is a busy person ... and that's the way she likes it.

The assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering, along with being a dedicated teacher to her students, is involved in two research endeavors. But she still makes time to encourage girls and young women to pursue careers in STEM.

"If my life wasn't busy, I would feel bad," said Muraleedharan, who joined the university in fall 2013. "SVSU has given me so many opportunities to make a difference in so many ways."

Many of her efforts at SVSU are the result of a lifelong passion for science. For instance, she discovered her love for STEM studies during her childhood growing up in Chennai, India. Now, as an adult with a Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering, she hopes to inspire girls and young women to discover the same love she found in her youth.

"I want to be a good role model for girls," Muraleedharan said. "For one thing, women are underrepresented in every engineering class, and I would like to see that change. They are very capable. They just need to know about the opportunities out there."

One way Muraleedharan attempts to connect females with STEM is to serve as adviser for SVSU's chapter of the Society of Women Engineers. Muraleedharan and the student members engage in outreach efforts to K-12 schools in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

They advocate STEM to girls in those schools. In February, the group played a role in SVSU's STEMpalooza, where Girl Scouts participated in science-based games and activities for a day.

Muraleedharan also is involved in SVSU's Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow STEM Scholars Network. She leads the initiative's summer camp that teaches high school students how to operate robotic technology in an engaging way. Last summer's camp finished with students building robots that competed in sumo wrestling-style contests.

Muraleedharan is hard at work with a cross-disciplinary group of faculty members on a data-mining research project that could help educators better understand what makes students timid about STEM. Using a computer program that analyzes mood based on speech pattern and body gestures, Muraleedharan and her colleagues are interviewing college students to explore links between student accuracy in solving STEM questions and their confidence when voicing those answers.

She also is involved in a second research project with another cross-disciplinary group of faculty members. This team's research is aimed at helping disabled people better navigate challenges relating to their disability. Muraleedharan's specific focus is intended to explore ways autistic individuals can better live independently from a caregiver.



Joe Wojtkiewicz

Manager of Instructional Technology • March Staff Member of the Month

Please don't try to Google-search Joe Wojtkiewicz's old websites.

That's a request directly from the SVSU manager of instructional technology, who would rather see his adolescent endeavors as a webmaster in the late 1990s fade into Internet oblivion.

"I'm sure they're still on the Internet somewhere," Wojtkiewicz said of the gaming websites he admits would seem archaic by today's standards. "Unfortunately, they probably are."

Those online creations of his youth may seem to fit the Memphis, Michigan, native's interest — and eventual career — in Information Technology Services, but Wojtkiewicz appeared headed down the path of a different career when he first arrived at SVSU as a student.

He enrolled in 2002, in large part to stay close to his fiancé at the time, Courtney, who was studying education. Wojtkiewicz had also set his sights on becoming a teacher.

While he eventually received his bachelor's in history education in 2007, his work as a student employee led him to a career in information technology. Wojtkiewicz began in ITS as a student in 2004 and he was hired part-time while still a student in 2007. When he notified his supervisor that he planned to seek a job as a teacher after graduation, Wojtkiewicz was offered a full-time position at SVSU within a week of receiving his bachelor's degree.

"I've been here ever since," he said. "I really like the work. I like helping people and finding solutions to problems."

Wojtkiewicz's responsibilities include assisting faculty and staff with the university's technology.

One of his most comprehensive tasks at the moment involves overseeing the upgrading of smart podiums in 160 classrooms across the main campus. The initiative involves gutting the podiums, removing the analog-era electronics inside those podiums and installing HD-quality, widescreen technology. He expects to finish work throughout the entire campus within five years.

"I'm trying to standardize everything so that everyone has the same experience," he said. "I find people don't have as many questions if they have the same experience with the technology wherever they go."

Wojtkiewicz said the use of technology is much more critical to education than when he attended SVSU as a student less than a decade ago.

Still, some things remain the same from those undergraduate days, including his loyalty to the school. That fiancé he followed here? They married in 2006 — in Founder's Hall. They also are raising two children, newborn Luke, and 4-year-old Evan — and Evan's baby shower was in Gilbertson Hall.

Wojtkiewicz's reviews of SVSU's hosting amenities were much stronger than the reviews of the old websites he designed.

"You can't beat the food here," he said.



Join your faculty and staff colleagues
at the 27th annual

All-University Awards Banquet

Friday, April 8

Reception 5 p.m.

Dinner 6 p.m.

Awards Program 7 p.m.

**BANQUET ROOM DOORS OPEN
AT 5:30 P.M.**

FRANC A. LANDEE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Erik Trump

EARL L. WARRICK AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Scott Youngstedt

HOUSE FAMILY AWARD FOR TEACHER IMPACT

David Rzeszutek

MARY H. ANDERSON ADJUNCT FACULTY AWARD

Walter Reynolds

RUBEN DANIELS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Joseph Ofori-Dankwa

TERRY ISHIHARA AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CO-CURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT

Adam Coughlin • Jaime Leyrer

THOMSON AWARD FOR EMPOWERING LEARNING IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Jason Schoenmeyer

ROOSEVELT RUFFIN DIVERSITY AWARD

Vanessa Brooks Herd

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD

Debbie Fegan • Denise Berry

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Leola Wilson

Professional Profile

- **James Bowers**, assistant professor of criminal justice, and **Poonam Kumar**, director of online/hybrid learning, presented a session titled “Use of iPads to Support Group Work in the Classroom” at the iPads in Higher Education Conference, March 16 in San Francisco.
- **Maribel Colorado-Garcia**, assistant professor of modern foreign languages, chaired the Spanish Literature, Language and Culture section at the 2016 Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters Conference, March 4 at SVSU. She also presented a paper titled “Reflejo del policial duro y de la complejidad social y política en la narrativa mexicana del siglo XXI: Conducir un tráiler de Rogelio Guedea” at this conference. She was elected co-chair of the Spanish section for the 2017 MASAL Conference.
- **Julie Foss**, associate professor of modern foreign languages, was appointed editor of the Conference Proceedings Report for the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. CSCTFL is a regional foreign language organization that serves 14 Midwestern states.
- **Andy Pandian**, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, presented a paper titled “Manufacturing cell layout improvement using Simulation Modeling and Group Technology” at the Industrial Engineering and Operations management International conference, March 8-10 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The paper was awarded as the best track paper on simulation and modeling.
- **Helen Raica-Klotz**, Writing Center director, and **Chris Giroux**, Writing Center assistant director and assistant professor of English, along with Writing Center tutors Bria Rivet and Ky Wojciechowski, presented “Multiple Modes, Mediums and Literacies, But One Mission: Strategic Planning for Your Writing Center” at the East Central Writing Centers Association Conference, March 3-4 in Alliance, Ohio.
- **Matthew Vannette**, associate professor of physics, had a paper titled “Superconductivity and Itinerant Ferromagnetism of Y_9Co_7 Probed by AC Susceptibility” accepted for publication in the *Journal of Physics: Condensed Matter*.

New Cardinals

- **David Heintskill**, research analyst, and **Trisha Heintskill**, associate director of scholarships & financial aid, announced the birth of a daughter, Madelyn Rose Heintskill (6 lbs., 6 oz., 20 in.), March 2.

Condolences

- To **Claudia Anderson**, database administrator/security officer, whose mother, Patricia Anderson, passed away March 14.
- To **Mary Kowaleski**, executive assistant to the president and secretary to the Board of Control, whose mother-in-law, Angeline “Toni” Kowaleski, passed away March 10.
- To the family of **Rajendra “Raji” Kumar Mondol**, an SVSU alumnus who passed away March 24. He was the son of Merlyn Mondol, professor emerita of psychology, and the brother of Rajkumari Wiener, an SVSU Foundation board member.
- To the family of **Hosie Seawood**, who passed away March 16. Hosie retired as a custodian in 2001.

Briefly Speaking

- Faculty and staff may present the diploma jacket to graduating members of their immediate family during the Commencement ceremonies at 7:30 p.m., Friday, May 6, and/or at 11 a.m., Saturday, May 7. Please call Linda Schmidt in the Alumni Relations Office at ext. 4196, or email llschmid@svsu.edu, to make arrangements. To confirm your regalia order, call the Bookstore at ext. 4277.

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.

J.J. Boehm

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

Tim Inman

Director of Photography, Advertising
& Publishing Services
tmi@svsu.edu • (989) 964-4086

Submission Deadline:

**Noon on Wednesday before the publication date.
Please send items by email to: jjboehm@svsu.edu.**