

## SVSU research shows police in greater Saginaw respond faster than national average

Data analyzed by an SVSU professor shows that the average time it takes police to respond to serious crimes in the Saginaw region is significantly less than the national average.

During the three-year interval of 2013 through 2015, the average time it took police to respond to a call of a "part one crime" in the city of Saginaw and immediate surrounding areas was just more than 7 minutes. That is about 36 percent quicker than the national average of 11 minutes, which was reported in 2013.

Andrew Miller, associate professor of geography, analyzed some 45,000 calls that Saginaw County 911 received in that time period regarding crimes such as assaults, burglaries and robberies.

"We're getting really good response time over almost the entirety of the region," Miller said.

Saginaw County 911 provided the data to Miller as part of an ongoing partnership between SVSU and local law enforcement agencies through



Andrew Miller presents his research to the Saginaw County Crime Prevention Council.

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"It's fantastic to see we're below the average," said Randy Pfau, the director of Saginaw County 911. "It tells us that we're doing our job efficiently here on our end. There's always room for improvement, but it's great to hear that we're where we need to be."

Pfau and his staff chalk up the success to Saginaw County agencies having the mindset that they are all in the public safety battle together.

"It has everything to do with collaboration," Pfau said. "Everyone at every level working together."

Miller did not just determine an average response time. Working with Ashlee Oaks,

an international studies major from Trenton who graduated SVSU in May, and Dan Johnson, a 2015 SVSU alumnus, he also examined how much quicker or slower an average time was in a specific location.

"Call response times are great, but if the police are repeatedly being called to one location over another, the response time should be faster to areas in need," Miller explained.

To create such a tool, Miller incorporated both call response times and density of 911 calls for service to produce a map that showed which areas "needed improvement" or had times that were "acceptable" or "good." Miller presented his findings to the Saginaw County

Crime Prevention Council earlier this month.

"We want to give police agencies something that they can see and say, 'OK, we now know these are the areas where we have to get better response times,'" Miller said.

"We live in a visual world," Pfau noted. "We know what the numbers are, but to see them in this aspect is great to give you that perspective that all that time and effort and hard work is fruitful and very positive for our community."

Miller's findings were the latest in a series of presentations he has delivered related to public safety. He and numerous SVSU students first mapped out crime "hot spots" in the Saginaw region and recently analyzed the impact that blight reduction had on crime in the area.

"It's absolutely great to have that level of professionalism right here in our backyard," Pfau said of Miller and SVSU. "We work closely with them all the time. Depending on what the concern or situation is, I know we can always call them and they're a fantastic resource for us."

Saginaw Township Police Chief Don Pussehl, who leads the Saginaw County Police Chiefs Association, added the relationship between SVSU and local law enforcement is "fantastic." He credited SVSU for a sustained commitment to the community.

"I've seen over the last five to six years an increased input from faculty members from SVSU," Pussehl said. "Their willingness to engage in the research and give students an opportunity to have real life experience is a benefit to the community. It sheds a very positive light on SVSU and what the students are doing."

## SVSU race team makes strong showing at world competition

SVSU's Cardinal Formula Race team sped its way to another impressive performance, posting the top score among exclusively undergraduate programs for the third consecutive year at the Formula Society of Automotive Engineers Collegiate Design Series May 10-13 at Michigan International Speedway. SVSU placed 45th overall among the 120 colleges and universities from across the world who competed. As has become a team trademark, SVSU again designed and built one of the fastest college race cars in the world, finishing sixth in the acceleration category. SVSU has won the acceleration event twice, in 2008 and 2014. This year's competition was won by the University of Stuttgart from Germany.



# Norm Wika

*Assistant Professor of Music*

When it comes to multi-tasking between interests, Norm Wika has a hard time pairing any task with music. Even listening to a music station when driving to work can be a challenge for the SVSU assistant professor of music. Instead, he opts for talk radio.

"If I'm listening to music, I want to be fully engaged in it," he said. "I enjoy the music more when I can be fully committed to it."

Wika has not been a stranger to commitment lately. In the fall, he committed to working at SVSU, where he also began leading the university's bands ... and creating one that didn't exist previously.

After working at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma for nine years, Wika said he and his wife wanted a change of scenery. An opening at SVSU provided more than that.

"The thing that really attracted me here was that the faculty all seemed to be on the same page in terms of the direction of the department, and those goals align with my career goals and personal goals in terms of music and music education," Wika said.

"I felt I had the experience and knowledge that could contribute to the department goals."

Along with serving as the band director, Wika also created a wind ensemble for student musicians. His expectations: to host one wind ensemble performance per semester.

"I selected a program of music that was fairly standard," he said. "By the time we got three rehearsals into it, I could see the students were performing at a very high level, so we added a second program for that first semester. That was fun; to be part of the inaugural wind ensemble."

Wika doesn't consider leading musical programs or teaching the subject part of his "job," though. "I don't know that music is so much a career as it is a lifestyle for me," he said. "I do music all day."

When he isn't teaching or directing SVSU student musicians, he is fine-tuning his own musical chops. Since moving to the Great Lakes Bay Region, he has performed with the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra as a trombonist. He has played the instrument since he first dove into the lifestyle by joining the school band as a fourth grader in Kansas City. There were a few moments in those early years where Wika contemplated quitting. But by high school, he was rarely distracted by other interests during a musical journey that led him to SVSU.



# Karen Erwin

*Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Students • May Staff Member of the Month*

Karen Erwin, administrative assistant to the dean of students, has an office located in the Student Affairs suite. The team in this suite — Erwin included — carry many responsibilities, largely helping the many students who find their way into the office.

Erwin, though, is quite modest when talking about herself, and often directs the attention on others. But the Saginaw native is more outspoken when the conversation turns toward her job, her workplace environment, and the points of pride that lead her to love both. “We’re here to help students succeed,” she said. “That’s why we’re here. That’s why I’m here.”

Erwin’s road “here” began as a member of SVSU’s clerical pool in 2000. Eventually, she was hired part time to help manage the budgets of Student Affairs, Residential Life and two registered student organizations. By 2008, she had transitioned to full time.

With Erwin’s desk located at the center of the Student Affairs office, she interacts with a lot of students. She greets everyone who enters the office with a friendly smile and asks how she can help. Frequently, she guides students and visitors to classrooms or offices around campus.

Among her favorite days are those in which the Cardinal food pantry lifts the spirits of students in need. Erwin is a member of the committee that created the program. “We have to do our little part to help students who need help in that way,” she said. “When students are content physically, they’re able to succeed academically. That’s important.”

When Michele Gunkelman, director of residential life, learned her colleague was the recipient of the May Staff Member of the Month award, Gunkelman decided some playfully-interjectory praise was in order. Peeking her head into the office where the interview for this profile was underway, Gunkelman said, “Karen is the best-est!”

She wasn’t alone among the office’s inhabitants to express high praise for Erwin. Erwin’s care for students was reciprocated, too. “You’re going to be famous!” one of the office’s student-workers said — in an excited tone — to Erwin as the author of this profile exited the suite. Another student exclaimed “Yes!” in response to that suggestion.

Erwin smiled at the students’ giddiness on her behalf.

“It’s a great day to be a Cardinal” is emblazoned on a sign above the suite’s front door, and it’s a mantra beloved by Erwin.





The new Cardinal Square Farmers Market opened Tuesday, May 23. The collaborative venture between SVSU and Kochville Township is intended to support local farmers and local businesses. Through September, the market will be open from 1 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Cardinal View Plaza across from campus. Tyson McKinley, a political science and public administration major from Coldwater, is serving as the market manager. The new market will replace the farmer's market that was held on campus last year.

## Professional Profile

- **Mark Giesler**, associate professor of social work, co-presented "A Phenomenological Inquiry of School Counselors' Street-Level Bureaucracy in Addressing LGBT Bullying" with colleague John Palladino from Eastern Michigan University, May 7-9 at the World 2017 Anti-Bullying Forum in Stockholm, Sweden.
- **Elizabeth Roe**, professor of nursing, and **Karen Brown-Fackler**, associate professor of nursing, presented research titled "Nursing Student Attitudes Towards the Elderly: A Descriptive-Comparative Study," April 22 at the Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders conference in Austin, Texas.
- **Robert Tuttle**, professor of mechanical engineering, presented two papers at national conferences. At Metalcasting Congress he presented "Effect of Austenite Fraction on Rare Earth Grain Refinement." He also served as session chair for two sessions. At AISTech, he presented "Effect of Rare Earth Additions on 4130." Also, he had his paper titled, "Thermophysical Properties of Green Sands," accepted for publication in *AFS Transactions*.

## New Cardinals

- **John Baesler and Jennifer Stinson**, associate professors of history, announced the adoption of a infant daughter, Charlotte Marggrete Baesler.
- **Travis and Whitney Pashak** announced the birth of a son, Louis John Pashak (6 lbs., 11 oz., 19 in.), May 6. Travis is an assistant professor of psychology and Whitney is a research specialist in the Institutional Research office.

## Condolences

- To **Kelly Addis**, administrative secretary/office coordinator in Admissions, whose father-in-law, Charles "Chuck" Addis, passed away April 22.
- To **Sharon Carlin**, admissions & certification secretary, whose mother, Christine Sequin, passed away May 21.
- To **Dottie Millar**, professor of teacher education, whose mother-in-law, Phyllis Millar-Horrigan, passed away May 8.
- To **Suzanne Savoy**, associate professor of nursing, whose husband, Jack Ferlinz, M.D., passed away May 18.
- To **Cheryl Sylvester**, custodian, whose father, Harold Rickel, passed away May 2.
- To the family of **John Wesolek**, an adjunct instructor, alumnus, and former SVSU assistant football coach, who passed away May 8.
- To **Janice Wolff**, professor emerita of English, whose husband, Terry Wolff, passed away May 19.

**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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