

# Outstanding Freshmen Drawn to SRU

Meet Nikki Gwin, one of 80 freshmen SRU recruited through its new Merit Scholarship. Only the highest achieving students qualified for the \$1,250-a-year benefit.

Gwin's credentials are impressive. Tenth in her class at Mohawk High School, she held a 4.4 grade-point average her senior year and graduated with a 4.2. Her SAT score was 1260 and she was accepted into the National Honor Society of High School Scholars and Who's Who Among American High School Students, among other achievements.

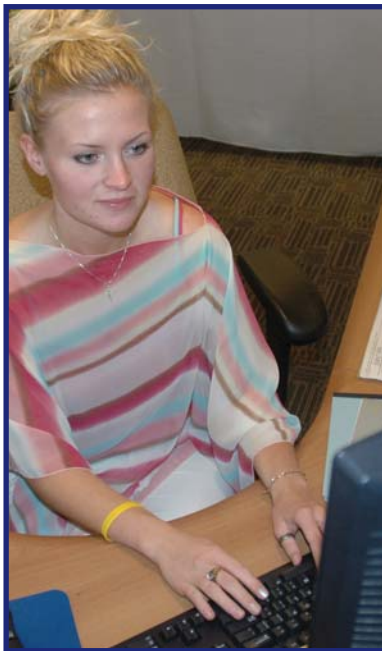
She chose a dual major in special education/elementary education at SRU.

"Receiving the merit scholarship was a large dealbreaker," said Gwin, who could have gone anywhere. "I was glad to see that Slippery Rock University had recognized my academic efforts in high school and was commending me for them by awarding me the Merit Scholarship."

She also appreciated SRU's affordable tuition, appealing campus and "its great reputation of being a good college to attend if you major in education."

All of the 80 newcomers arrived with grade-point averages above 3.5 and high SAT scores, because the scholarship requires them.

The influx of more accomplished students also reflects the launch of a strategic enrollment management plan a few years ago. It has produced a number of benefits:



*Freshman Nikki Gwin, recipient of SRU's new Merit Scholarship, embodies the best of The Rock. She graduated high school with a 4.2 grade-point average and could have attended any college she wanted. She chose SRU because of the new scholarship and its reputation for excellence in teacher-preparation. She's majoring in special education/ elementary education and works part-time at the Regional Learning Alliance in Allegheny County.*

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MARIANNE CORNETTI'S NEXT PERFORMANCE AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY: DEC. 10, SWOPE MUSIC HALL



*Opera singer Marianne Cornetti (left) teaches masterclasses at SRU and has performed to raise money for music scholarships. A masterclass gives students the opportunity to have their singing critiqued by a professional. Cornetti's concert at SRU a year ago raised \$1,000 for scholarships, and SRU raises \$5,000 a year for music scholarships through ticket sales to various concerts.*

- \* 11 consecutive semesters of enrollment increases
- \* 81-percent increase in African-American enrollment
- \* \$309,215 in performance funding because of increased retention of students
- \* 58-percent increase in out-of-state freshmen enrollment
- \* 8-percent increase in students returning for their sophomore year

"SRU has become very strategic in managing its enrollment and has successfully increased quality, persistence and the perception of SRU in the community," Patty Hladio, director of financial aid, said. "Our ongoing challenge will be the competition with other colleges and universities in attracting the higher-achieving students – those with financial need and those without, especially at a time when the pool of high school students in Pennsylvania begins to diminish.

"Increased scholarship funding, especially funding that is unrestricted by donors, will provide the best opportunity to meet our goals."