

Rock Calendar

Listings taken from the
SRU Master Calendar of Events and other sources.

Today, May 4

Last day of classes

Summer/fall registration continues

TNT Basketball Tournament
5 p.m., Aebersold Student Recreation Center
(continues Saturday and Sunday)
(Courts not available)

SRU Concert Choir, 7:30 p.m.
Miller Auditorium
Stephen Barr, directs
(\$3, general public; SRU students, free)
Also: 8 p.m., Sunday, Succop Theater,
Butler County Community College, \$10

Saturday, May 5

CPR Pro, 9 a.m.

Aebersold Student Recreation Center
(\$30, ARC members; \$40, non-members)

SRU Jazz Festival Concert

PSAC Baseball Championship
Jack Critchfield Park

5:30 p.m., University Union
Stephen Hawk, conducts
(All-day festival: Union and Swope Music Hall)

Sunday, May 6

Aebersold Student Recreation Center
Closes at 5 pm. for "Senior Send Off"

Monday, May 7

Finals week opens
(continues through Friday)

Thursday, May 10

Aebersold Student Recreation Center
Hours reduced: 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday, May 11

Commencement Rehearsal
1:30 p.m., N. Kerr Thompson Stadium

Saturday, May 12

Commencement
Martha Smith, speaker
11 a.m. N. Kerr Thompson Stadium

See additional events: www.sru.edu

Have a great
summer!

rockpride

Volume 7 • Issue 13 • May 4, 2007

A publication from the Office of the President for faculty, staff, and friends of Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania

Consumers Digest rates SRU one of USA's 'best values' among colleges and universities

Consumers Digest has ranked Slippery Rock University as one of the "Top 5 Best Values among Public Colleges and Universities." In its June issue, the magazine lists the 100 "top values" in American higher education. Slippery Rock University is ranked #5 among public colleges and universities.

The magazine analyzed approximately 3,800 institutions of higher learning. The rankings are based on attributes that validate or define the institutions' academic prowess factored against annual cost of tuition and room-and-board. Rankings were derived from a formula that blended the academic excellence of first-time freshman at a school (standardized test scores, high-school rank, grade-point average) with the institution's educational quality (4- and 6-year graduation rate, student-to-faculty ratio, percentage of faculty holding a PhD).

(See Consumers Digest page 3)

Online special education courses offer teachers convenient certification option

Teachers across the state and nation seeking special education certification no longer need to juggle work schedules or give up every evening and weekend traveling to classes. Thanks to Slippery Rock University, certification classes or even a master's program are now just a click away.

"Teachers are seeing an increased need for special education certification and are turning to Slippery Rock University's expanded online courses to meet those needs," said Dennis Fair, chair of the special education department and graduate coordinator for the department's master of education degree.

"We have added or expanded 15 special education courses on the Internet as a way of helping those already teaching meet the increased demands of inclusion education in their classrooms. Inclusion education means students with special needs are mainstreamed as much as possible during the school day," Fair said.

SRU offers three distinct programs designed to meet varying needs of classroom teachers seeking to expand their special education skills.

(See Special education page 4)

SRU senior continues family tradition; fourth generation to graduate from The Rock

When Emily Watson walks across the platform at Slippery Rock University to receive her degree May 12, she'll continue a family tradition that dates to 1913. Watson, an elementary education and special education major from Slippery Rock, will be the fourth generation in her family to graduate from SRU – just like her father, mother, grandfather, and great-grandfather before her.

She is the fifth generation associated with SRU. Her great-great-grandfather was an original stockholder and trustee when plans for what was to become Slippery Rock University were first considered.

"It really is fun to think of all of the Watsons who have attended Slippery Rock University," Watson said.

In addition to the "family factor," Watson said she elected to attend SRU because of the strong reputation of its College of Education.

(See Family tradition page 4)

SRU hosts Jazz Festival Saturday – see page 3

announcements

Scott Rhodes, director of student and academic services for the School of Education at Duquesne University, will interview for the position of **graduate admissions director** at SRU at 2 p.m. Monday. The public session is in Room 156 of the North Hall Welcome Center. Rhodes earned his master of science degree in multi-media technology at Duquesne University and his bachelor's of arts degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Interviews for other candidates are at 2 p.m. May 10 and May 11 in the Welcome Center. Details will follow in E-rockpride. Candidate interview schedules and vitas are available in Room 105 of McKay Education Building or at the open sessions.

The campus is invited to a retirement reception honoring **Donald Tompkins**, associate professor in the School of Business, from 12:30-3:30 p.m. Wednesday in Eisenberg Classroom Building, Room 313. Tompkins retires with 25 years service.

The following have joined or been promoted in the SRU family: **Susan Hannam**, dean, College of Health, Environment and Science; **Windy Stafford**, interim director and chief of University Police; **Geoffrey Ballard, Patricia Disher and Robert Davis**, all police officer 1; **Brian Campbell**, distributed systems specialist 1; **Stacey McLaughlin**, temporary clerk 1 in printing services; and **Kathy Dombeck**, clerk typist 2 in sociology/anthropology/social work; **Scott Albert**, director of facilities; **Brian Overly and Karen Marmie**, both custodial worker 1 in facilities; **Sandra Pisor**, temporary custodial worker 1 in facilities; and **Robert Agostino**, utility plant helper. Joining the staff at the Regional Learning Alliance are **Brandi Price and Jeffrey Speicher**, both temporary custodial worker 1; and **Erin Seaberg**, temporary clerk typist 1.

Cathie Sadler, coordinator of Family Connections, is seeking academic presentations and educational programs for the **2007 Friends and Family Weekend** scheduled for Sept. 14-16. Departments interested in joining the program should call Ext. 2719.

The Slippery Rock University Disaster Resistant University/Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee has scheduled a public meeting for 10 a.m. May 9 in Room 206 of the University Union. The meeting was called to solicit public comment on all aspects related to creating the plan. Call John Bonando, assistant vice president of student life, for details.

Library open 'round the clock as students prepare for finals

Bring on the caffeine. When Slippery Rock University's Bailey Library opens Sunday at 1 p.m., it begins a marathon run of being open 109 continuous hours for finals week – until 2 a.m. Friday.

The extended hours are all part of the library's commitment to students, said Philip Tramdack, library director.

Library officials approved the expanded-hours plan after a request from the Student Government Association. The library experimented with the overnight hours during fall semester's finals week, with 100 students a night participating.

"It went well last time so we're offering it again," Tramdack said. "Our goal is to accommodate the needs of students."

For security reasons, librarians will lock the doors from 2-7:45 a.m. Monday-Thursday, allowing students to leave any time but preventing others from entering, Tramdack said. "If you are in the building by 2 a.m. you can study there all night," Tramdack said.

Students will not be able to check out laptops from 2-7:45 a.m., but desk computers will be available, and the library plans to serve free refreshments. A reduced staff will be on site all night.



CELEBRATING 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOCIAL WORK AT SRU:

Thomas Bechard, assistant professor of sociology, anthropology and social work (left), and Michael Stowe, associate professor in the department (right), share a discussion with Stephen Marson, University of North Carolina, professor of social work, before he delivered the keynote address marking the 25th anniversary of Slippery Rock University's undergraduate program in social work. The daylong Internship Supervisor Certificate Program and Workshop was hosted at the Regional Learning Alliance in Cranberry. Marson, a 35-year veteran in social work and North Carolina's 2005 Social Worker of the Year as named by the state's chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, titled his address "Ethics in Social Work Practice."

SRU community overwhelmingly selects 'Old Main' ID card style

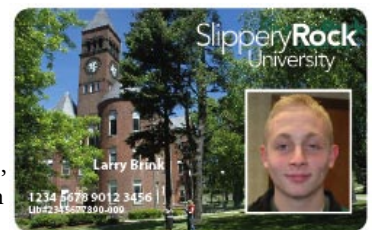
As they say on American Idol, "The votes have been tallied." In a Web-based poll seeking opinions regarding proposed designs for the University's new identification cards, the Slippery Rock University community overwhelmingly chose the "Old Main" design.

"We were absolutely thrilled with campus participation. More than 571,682 votes were cast," Rita Abent, executive director for public relations, said. "The Old Main design garnered 344,437 votes; the cascading Slippery

Rock design came in second with 122,806, the 'It's a great time to be at Slippery Rock' design earned 45,071 votes, the traditional Slippery Rock University with a ghosted background was fourth with 34,002 and the contemporary design came in last with 25,207 clicks."

The Public Relations Office initiated the poll. "This fall, the University will introduce a new identification card, and we wanted to solicit opinion from the University community about the proposed designs," Abent said. "Since American Idol is so popular, we decided to run this in a similar format – except that there was no charge to vote."

All five designs were posted on the Web and people had from 2 p.m. Monday, April 23 through midnight Wednesday, April 25 to participate. "I presented the results from the campus poll to the President's Cabinet last Monday and they supported the people's choice. Our new card will feature Old Main," Abent said.



SRU Jazz Festival features Jazz mallet player Dave Samuels

Dave Samuels, one of the top mallet players of his generation, will be the featured guest at the seventh annual Slippery Rock University Jazz Festival Saturday. Samuels will offer performance tips to 10 regional high school jazz bands then join the SRU Jazz Ensemble for a public performance.

The all-day event, organized by Stephen Hawk, associate professor of music, allows participating high school jazz musicians a chance to perform, participate in clinics and join a masterclass offered by established jazz artists. Sessions are from



10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Swope Music Hall and the University Union.

Samuels will join the SRU Jazz Ensemble, directed by Hawk, for a 5:30 p.m. public performance in the University Union.

“We host the festival to give high school jazz students the opportunity to show their talents, to receive feedback and

to meet with established jazz artists,” said Hawk. “Participating students will receive performance feedback from a panel of judges, gain information on their particular instrument, and have the chance to talk with and hear Dave Samuels during the day’s activities.”

Samuels has been recognized for his fresh, new sound and creative approach to both the vibraphone and marimba. He demonstrated his versatility and gained worldwide recognition by performing and recording with a broad scope of artists ranging from Gerry Mulligan, Oscar Peterson, Chet Baker, Stan Getz, Carla Bley, The Yellowjackets, Pat Metheny, Bruce Hornsby, Frank Zappa, The Fantasy Band and Double Image to the Caribbean Jazz Project. During his time with Spyro Gyra, a five-time Grammy-nominated group, the band was named #1 Contemporary Jazz Artist and Contemporary Jazz Group of the '80s by Billboard magazine.

His awards include being voted Best Vibes Player in both *Jazziz* and *Modern Drummer Magazine*. Samuels received a Grammy in 2003 for “Best Latin Jazz Recording” with his group the Caribbean Jazz Project and its CD “The Gathering.” In 2004, he received a second Grammy nomination for Best Latin Jazz Recording for the Caribbean Jazz Project’s release “Birds of a Feather,” and he was similarly nominated in 2005 for the group’s release “Here and Now – Live in Concert.”

Participating jazz bands include Slippery Rock High School, Upper St. Clair High School, North Allegheny High School, Kiski High School, State College High School, New Brighton High School, Greenville High School, West Allegheny High School, Norwin High School and Mars High School.

Items for **rockpride** should be sent to:
rockpride@sru.edu
Deadline is 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

SRU graduate takes top honor statewide for English thesis

Jason Stuart, a 2006 Slippery Rock University master of arts in English graduate, has received the Outstanding Thesis Award from the Pennsylvania Association of Graduate Schools. Stuart’s thesis examined similarities between Internet “culture wars” and the public’s reaction to the changing literary scene in 18th-century Britain.

“Jason’s thesis was so good I thought it would have a chance,” said Joseph McCarren, coordinator of SRU’s graduate program in English. “All of us were impressed when we read it. Winning the top award is quite an accomplishment. Hundreds of theses from a variety of fields were reviewed.”

Stuart, currently a doctoral student at Case Western Reserve University, said his SRU thesis committee, which included English faculty Danette DiMarco, Cindy LaCom and Nancy Barta-Smith, was outstanding.

“Each provided excellent input on the project, and these three women were instrumental in shaping my development as a student and a professional,” said Stuart of Meadville.

“The Literary Hack: Poetic Satire, Print Media and the Modern Author” argues that an entrenched conservatism produced outcries against avant-garde writings more than 200 years ago, similar to modern concerns about Internet decency, copyright and censorship. Stuart opposes censorship and describes blogs and Web sites as “new poetry.”

DiMarco, an expert in British literature, nominated the thesis. “This very issue of publishing [rights] is at the heart of our country’s democratic ideals and crosses way beyond the boundaries of English and media studies,” she wrote in a nominating letter. “We all experience institutional pressure, and we all should strive to constantly highlight the voice of the struggling.”

The Pennsylvania Association of Graduate Schools accepted theses from students at 50 Pennsylvania schools. Stuart received \$500 and a plaque for the top award. The non-profit organization promotes graduate education throughout the state.

Consumers Digest (Continued from page 1)

That “value-index” score was factored with the cost of attending each school to determine which schools offered the most academic value per dollar. The rankings were based on information from 2005-06, the latest school year for which data were available.

“Expert opinions and solid recommendations are two of our strengths,” says Randy Weber, publisher of *Consumers Digest*. “We applied those strengths to this examination of our country’s higher-learning institutions. It’s designed to help parents and students find schools that will meet families’ performance and financial requirements.”

“The *Consumers Digest* ranking is an unbiased validation of the value of an SRU degree. We are very proud of the quality academic programs, activities and services we provide and that we are an affordable institution. This national acknowledgment by *Consumers Digest* that our students receive a great education for their investment, is just one more reason why we can say that it’s a great time to be at Slippery Rock University,” Robert Smith, SRU president, said.

Special education (Continued from page 1)

"The University offers a master of education degree in special education for those who already have an undergraduate teacher education degree. We also offer a non-degree teacher certificate for those interested in teaching students with disabilities or those who need skills in teaching special needs students in their class. We also offer a master's program in special education supervision," Fair said.

"Our major goal is to provide teachers already working in the classroom with a more convenient way of learning the necessary skills and the course credits required to gain special education certification," Fair said.

The master of education in special education can be completed in one year. The non-degree certificate, available to those with an elementary education teaching certificate, requires 27 additional credits.

"We are seeing teachers join online for the certification, then electing to continue for the full master's degree program," Fair said.

SRU's school supervision program focuses on major roles of leadership in basic education and is offered in a two-year cycle beginning with summer classes. SRU offers three summer school sessions.

"While we are certainly concentrating on Pennsylvania teachers, the online program is open to teachers anywhere. We currently have students from Colorado and Arizona enrolled," Fair said.

"I have heard from a number of recent graduates who realized having special education certification or a master's degree in special education would make them more employable, so they returned to the classroom via the Internet to earn those necessary skills," Fair said.

SRU's special education department launched its online expansion at the start of the current semester following approval from the University's curriculum committee. "Nearly all of our special education faculty are involved with the online program," Fair said.

Fair said there are a number of advantages for taking online classes, especially for those students living some distance from campus as well as those facing scheduling difficulties, due to their work schedules. "Some classes, including those I teach, set deadlines for learning projects to be completed. Online students work on their own schedule. If Saturday or Sunday or four in the morning works for them; that is okay. The bottom line is, they learn and understand the material, thus gaining the necessary skills," Fair said. Online discussions with the entire class participating via the Internet provide students opportunities to share ideas and learn from one another."

Kelly Lynne Foust, an SRU graduate student taking one of Fair's online courses and working as a primary learning support classroom aide, has high praise for the program. "I was just asked to be part of an autistic support team and had some things to offer that I learned from your 'Developmental Disability' class. I have people asking me all of the time for information from my classes...this whole program has done wonderful things for my career and for my students." Foust earned her undergraduate degree at Clarion University and makes her home near Clarion.

Amy Mathesius, a special education high school teacher at Kremmling, Colo., is a Pennsylvania native, who discovered SRU's online courses while looking for ways to complete her master's degree. "I have taken two of SRU's online courses and find I can do a lot of the coursework on weekends, especially when I'm not working and my daughter is not at home. I like working on my own schedule."

"More than 80 students are already participating in SRU's online special education courses. We expect to see continued growth as demand by school districts increases," Fair said.

Current online course offerings include "Advanced Study of Exceptional Persons," "Contemporary Issues in Special Education," "Current Research in Special Education," "Developmental Disabilities," "Lifelong Learning for Exceptionalities" and "Special Education Law," among others.

Classified Ads

FOR RENT: Nice, country two-bedroom house close to campus, overlooking Wolf Creek. Available June 1; \$700 per month, plus utilities. Call 724-794-4602.

FOR RENT: First half of the month, half rent. One-bedroom apartments. Newly remodeled. Rent \$300-\$325 plus utilities. Sewage and trash included. HUD approved. Credit check and security required. Call 412-614-0683.

FOR RENT: Three-bedroom, two-bath home for rent in the Moniteau School District. Approximately 12 miles from SRU. Country setting, no indoor pets permitted. Call 724-290-8924.

FOR SALE: Gas grill, yard leaf sweep, artificial Christmas tree. Call 724-894-2992.

SlipperyRock
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www.SRU.edu
for a rock solid education

rockpride is produced by the Office of University Public Relations, 201 Old Main,
Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA 16057 724-738-2091

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Family tradition

(Continued from page 1)

"I knew the teacher education program here was outstanding. It offers programs that prepare students for today's classrooms and to work in diverse environments. My own program allowed me to spend 12 weeks student teaching in an urban school setting plus an opportunity to student teach in Mexico," Watson said. She is currently doing a four-week student-teaching placement in Mexico. She was among 18 SRU students roused from bed by a one-minute, 6.0 earthquake their first night abroad. None of the students were injured, but they will have an unexpected story to share when they return to campus Wednesday.

In looking over her family tree, Watson points out that her father, Robert Watson, graduated in 1970 from what was then Slippery Rock State College. He joined the SRU administration in 1972. After 33 years service, he retired as vice president for student life, but has returned to serve as co-interim vice president for University Advancement. Her mother, Karen McKeag Watson, graduated from SRSC in 1973 and still teaches fourth graders at Mercer Elementary School.

In 1940, grandfather John A. Watson received his bachelor's of science degree from what was then Slippery Rock State Teachers College, following in the footsteps of his father, and Emily's great-grandfather, Grove C. Watson, who received his degree in the teacher education program offered by Slippery Rock State Normal School in 1913.

Great-great grandfather John N. Watson was among the then Centerville community residents – forerunner to the borough of Slippery Rock – to call for a community facility where young people could learn to be teachers.

The history of the University, "Slippery Rock State College: The Legend Behind the Name," was written by her father and a building in the new \$110-million residence hall complex is named in his honor. The Watson Family Scholarship helps academically deserving SRU students.

Watson said she has made the most of her SRU education. "I've taken advantage of the University's international programs, including a semester's study in Australia as well as student leadership trips to London, Paris and Spain."

A student leader, she has been involved in Kappa Delta Phi, the education honorary; Lambda Epsilon Delta, the elementary education/early childhood honorary; Golden Key Honor Society; and Phi Kappa Phi, the national honorary at SRU.