**Wilkes Wants You**

Wilkes University broke new ground this spring with an advertising campaign that speaks one-on-one to prospective students — an unconventional concept never before seen in traditional higher education marketing. The campaign garnered the attention of Stuart Elliott, one of the most respected writers in the advertising industry, for an article in *The New York Times*.

A kiosk in the mall where potential Wilkes student Kate Murtaugh works reads: “Kate Murtaugh — You sell California beachwear. In Allentown. In the dead of winter. That kind of dedication will serve you well at Wilkes University. Kate, call a Colonel.”

“The ads create the exact reaction that we planned the media strategy around,” says Darryl Cilli, executive creative director of 160over90, the Philadelphia-based branding firm Wilkes hired to create the campaign. “Kate’s friends, co-workers, family and strangers are intrigued. People call the number out of curiosity and hear a current Wilkes student speaking directly to Kate about why she is such a great fit for Wilkes.”

“I’ve gotten a lot of positive feedback,” 18-year-old Megan Smith of Scranton, Pa., told Elliot, referring to the billboard addressed to her. “People at my school, all the teachers that I’ve never had, are saying, ‘Is that really you on the billboard?’ They really can’t believe it.”

Learn more about the ad campaign at [www.wilkes.edu](http://www.wilkes.edu).
MBA Program Offers New Concentration in Healthcare Administration

Responding to the region’s growing healthcare industry, Wilkes now offers a healthcare administration concentration for its master of business administration program.

“The healthcare MBA fills a niche between the general MBA and the very specialized, more narrowly focused master of healthcare administration,” says Justin Matus, assistant professor of business management and a specialist in healthcare issues. “It’s an attractive option for someone who is interested in the business of healthcare. Graduates will be well-equipped to lead a large department in any number of healthcare organizations, such as a hospital or managed care company or a long-term care system.”

Beyond the core MBA curriculum, the concentration will include two courses: Managing Healthcare Systems and Advanced Topics in Healthcare Management. Matus says the concentration was born out of a need for advanced, specialized training for managers in the growing healthcare field.

Steele Receives NSF Grant

Michael Steele, biology professor and Fenner Endowed Research Chair, recently received a collaborative $500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to continue research on animal-mediated seed dispersal and oak regeneration. Less than 10 percent of 200 proposals were funded. This is Steele’s third NSF grant in 13 years.

A behavioral and evolutionary ecologist, Steele studies interactions between plants and their seed dispersers and predators and their effect on forest regeneration. The NSF grant will fund studies conducted in partnership with Purdue University in Indiana. Eastern Pennsylvania has an 80 percent forest cover. Oak’s importance as a cash crop in Pennsylvania gives the professor’s work environmental and economic implications.

Steele will pursue mentoring grants from the university to involve up to 12 students per year in his research. Together, they will monitor the movement of birds such as blue jays to determine how forest fragmentation affects patterns of oak dispersal in Pennsylvania and Indiana.

An ongoing part of Steele’s research also involves food hoarding behavior of gray squirrels. That research has appeared in numerous publications and attracted the attention of wildlife researcher Sir David Attenborough. Last year, producers and a film crew from the cable television network Animal Planet traveled to Wilkes-Barre to tape Steele and students conducting research in Kirby Park. Animal Planet featured that footage in a program called The Most Extreme in autumn 2006.

Steele, with help from more than 150 students, has studied seed dispersal and oak regeneration for 15 years. He is working on two books based on this work.
Poetry in Transit: Verse Meets Bus

Riders of county buses will soon have more to look at than fellow travelers and fast food ads, thanks to Mischelle Anthony, assistant professor of English.

Luzerne County Transportation Authority will display the poetry of Wordsworth, Joyce, Dickinson and Frost on placards installed in inside spaces traditionally reserved for commercial advertising. LCTA estimates more than 4,500 people ride its 38 buses each day.

Anthony, a daily patron of LCTA buses, adapted her Poetry in Transit idea from an internationally lauded cultural program. It will include a series of poems by 20th-century masters.

“‘If we accept that an advertising jingle or slogan can stick in someone’s head and influence them, why not give the same opportunity to an inspiring, thought-provoking poem?’ Anthony asks. ‘In our department recently, we’ve focused on ways to move literature outside the classroom. This seemed the most obvious place for it. Educational institutions like Wilkes have an obligation to transform theory into practice. If poetry can really enrich our lives, then let’s get it out there.’”

Inspired by Poems on the Underground, a successful program that began in London in 1986, Anthony will introduce new pieces of poetry – from haikus to 14-line sonnets – to the buses each month. The program is sponsored by Wilkes, Lamar Advertising and LCTA.

“Dr. Anthony approached us with the idea of installing poetry on the LCTA buses, and we jumped at the chance to be involved in such a wonderful program,” says James Gattuso, local sales manager at Lamar Advertising. The company provided the advertising space free of charge.

“We see this as a value-added service for our patrons,” says Stanley Strelish, executive director of LCTA. “I envision many surprised and delighted faces when our riders see the poetry. We’re always looking for ways to make LCTA transportation an enjoyable experience. This program certainly fills that need.”

The Poetry Society of America runs a similar program called Poetry in Motion. Funded by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the program is active in 14 cities across the country.

“Wilkes-Barre’s version is locally funded and created,” Anthony notes. “This is for the people of Luzerne County. If it takes off, in the future I hope to involve local poets.”

New Ed.D. Degree Attracts Hundreds of Inquiries

Even before the state’s February approval of the University’s new doctor of education degree in educational leadership, the program had prompted more than 300 inquiries from prospective students.

The 60-credit Ed.D. program includes majors in higher education administration, kindergarten through 12th-grade administration and educational technology leadership.

“The program’s core focus is on developing leaders,” reports Mary Kropiewnicki, associate professor of education and assistant to the provost. Kropiewnicki, who developed the Ed.D. curriculum over two years, noted that many inquiries have come from private industry, policy-level decision makers and state lawmakers.

The campus-based program, which will offer some courses online, will take most candidates seven to eight years to complete, including about two years of dissertation research and development.

“To accomplish the demanding goals of education, we teachers must always be learning,” says Leslie Nicholas ’81, who was named 2004 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. “We must be the role models for lifelong learning. I am proud that my university continues to lead the way in the field of education.”

True to the university’s mentoring culture, each Ed.D. candidate will be part of a leadership development team and progress through the program with a core group of eight to 10 classmates. “The teams will provide mutual support through the rigorous curriculum and will provide mutual support through common coursework and study groups,” Kropiewnicki explains. Candidates also will be assigned a mentor instead of the traditional faculty advisor.
IF WE COMPETE IN BUSINESS WE will naturally seek out and do business with and prefer to do business with businesses and people that we like. There is nothing rational or logical about that. Harley is competing with the absolute best manufacturing companies in the world. If we can get people, for whatever irrational reason, to like us just a little bit more than they like everybody else, we can become more competitive.

Wilkes MBA Goes Global

Sidhu School MBA students worked side by side with 10 counterparts from Punjabi University, India, as part of a new exchange program. The Indian students came to the Wilkes campus Feb. 24 to March 17 and took the course Business Issues in a Dynamic Environment. American and Indian students worked together in groups to present an overview of eight U.S. industry sectors, including technology, transportation and pharmaceuticals.

As Anthony Liuzzo, professor of business and economics, covered topics like antitrust law and federal and state regulations, students from Punjab School of Management Studies shared perspectives from their country. “Our students noted that they’ve been taught about diversity, but they could actually feel the cultural diversity in this class,” Liuzzo says, adding that Punjab and Sidhu School students also had opportunity to eat lunch and shop together. “This was very helpful to both sides.”

This fall, economics Professor Waghiha Taylor will take several Sidhu School MBA students to Punjabi University. Says Liuzzo: “It is truly an international exchange.”