

YSU 2020

Cornerstone on Regional Engagement Executive Summary May 2013

The Regional Engagement Cornerstone of YSU's 2020 Strategic Plan has addressed numerous initiatives, some of which will have a profound impact on our region in broad and lasting ways. While some initiatives are complete or in various forms of progress, it is important to point out that many initiatives in Regional Engagement are qualitative and are difficult to measure. Below is a brief summary that highlights many of the initiatives and some of the accomplishments achieved.

The University's and the region's economic development partners recognize the symbiosis of the relationship, and several projects are worthy of mention. The YSU Research Foundation (YSURF) collaborated with the Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce to establish a working relationship with Power Plaza, LLC (Korea). The result of this effort was the development of at least two Memoranda of Understanding to facilitate future applied research collaborations between Power Plaza and the YSU College of STEM. In April of 2013, YSU and PRISM/MAGNET (Partnership for Regional Innovation Services to Manufacturers/ Manufacturing and Advocacy Growth Network) signed a MOU to join a consortium of Northeast Ohio universities to offer logistical, research, and advocacy support for small and medium sized companies to work on new products and technologies. Our STEM College has quickly adjusted to the opportunities and challenges of the emerging natural gas industry. The establishment of a Natural Gas and Water Institute, in cooperation with YSURF, is nearing completion of a consortium agreement with local and regional industries interested in water resource research. Providing experiential opportunities for our regional workforce is among our paramount responsibilities of YSU, and the University was the recipient of funding from the Ohio Board of Regents for our Program for Internships and Coops in Advanced Manufacturing and Related Industries (PICAM), which resulted in a total overall funding of nearly \$1.3 million. The University must serve as a leader in manufacturing research, and in 2012, Youngstown was announced as the location of the first National Advanced Manufacturing Initiative, the \$30 million National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute (NAMII), funded by the U.S. Departments of Defense, Energy, and Labor.

The University also serves the region by offering diverse arts/cultural programming to broaden audience demographics. An active arts and culture scene is an important component in business and population retention and attraction. Arts and culture programming alone brought over 30,000 individuals onto campus this past year. As a diversity initiative, as well as cultivating future audiences, arts/culture programming within the Colleges of FPA and the CLASS are actively engaged with the Community Diversity Programming series. In the fall of 2013, a professional minority actor was recently featured in a University Theater production of "Broke-ology." As a strategic initiative, the Department of Theater and Dance will devote one of their season's programming spots toward programming to support audience diversification. The College of FPA has initiated "Penguin Playhouse," which is a theater initiative focused on a younger demographic, and recent performances of Hansel & Gretel and Cinderella have been tremendously successful at attracting a younger demographic. A partnership in cultural

programming has been established at the Jewish Community Center to include a theater camp for youth to serve the community.

We are continuing to successfully establish policies to reduce barriers to partnerships and improve efficiencies. Through YSURF, a STEM College testing service has been developed to encourage industrial-academic partnerships. WYSU has initiated numerous community partnerships in a high profile manner. These include partnerships with profit and non-profit entities to provide more programming services to the region as well as collaborations with *The Vindicator* and *The Business Journal* to add local news programming. Increasing coordination among academic units related to economic development and community engagement is critical to institutional efficiency as well as our ability to serve the community. Within the Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA), the Monus Entrepreneurship Center is collaborating with the Gerontology Program (HHS) to plan a regional conference that will include a student entrepreneurship competition focusing on new business ideas for the senior market. WCBA's Small Business Development Center continuously utilizes the skills of faculty members across campus to address business-related needs and planning. A way of doing this is by ensuring contemporary curricula, which reflects in innovative degree programming. The College of FPA is partnering with the Metro College to establish a Corporate Communication Training Center (funded, in part, by an Ohio Hub of Innovation and Opportunity grant) to offer communication skills training sessions. The College of FPA has been directly involved (Dean serves as co-chair) in a transformational regional arts advocacy initiative (Power of the Arts). To this date, the initiative has commissioned the first economic impact study for arts and culture in the region. In addition, the College is collaborating with the organization to offer a quarterly professional development series titled, "Arts Mean Business."

Athletics is a unique component of regional engagement, albeit expensive to maintain. Athletic events engage the community and forge alumni relations. In an effort to diversify the revenue stream for athletics, external funding is critical to competitiveness. The Athletic Department continues to explore other revenue opportunities, notably with fundraising. A recent \$500,000 gift was received from Farmers National Bank for the new Soccer Complex west of Fifth Avenue. The number of attendees at athletics events in FY12 was 130,722. In addition, 11 of 18 teams finished in the top half of conference in 2012.

The Regional Engagement Cornerstone completed a major initiative in 2012 by creating a task force to examine violent behavior and community safety. The task force, referred to as the Community Safety Committee, promulgated a new YSU Workplace Violence Policy (in collaboration with the Domestic Violence Committee) and a Community Safety Summit. The Community Safety Summit, sponsored by the Bitonte College of HHS, was held on November 10, 2012. More than 100 persons attended and partook in the opportunity to engage with other individuals and organizations in social services and law enforcement to address the myriad of issues pertaining to community safety. In addition to safety, the health and wellness of a community is an important barometer of regional vitality. HHS is making significant progress toward a 100% health licensure examination goal, and nursing licensure and dental hygiene programs have achieved 100% passage.

While many nuances of regional engagement cannot be measured in clear ways, the University continues to be actively engaged in a variety of strata to enhance the quality of life, well being, and economic development of the community in which it exists.