News Briefs

SIRC partners with Daily News, Philly.com for Fan Project

For generations, Philadelphia sports fans have cheered their teams’ successes and booed their failures. Now, they have even more opportunities to share their collective voice.

The School of Tourism’s Sport Industry Research Center (SIRC) has partnered with the Philadelphia Daily News and Philly.com to create the Philly Fan Project, Greater Philadelphia’s most wide-ranging fan attitude survey.

“Philadelphia has a lot of stereotypes about its sport fandom, and this helped to either contextualize or create some new ideas about what sport fans think in Philadelphia,” SIRC Director Aubrey Kent said.

Beginning in March 2010, Delaware Valley residents who subscribe to a daily Philly.com sports e-mail were asked to take periodic surveys to measure their attitudes about local teams, coaches and players. Fans even picked their favorite team logos and all-time greatest rivals and moments. Other questions sought fan reaction to contract extensions, trades and ticket prices.

SIRC’s data and dozens of Daily News interviews produced some 30 articles online and in the newspaper, which publicized the Philly Fan Project with page-one features in May and September 2010. The research partnership is ongoing.

“We are ‘The People Paper’ and this was an opportunity to give the people a voice with the appropriate research that the professors and researchers at the SIRC can provide,” said Josh Barnett, Daily News executive sports editor. “This gave us hard data on these subjects.” — Brandon Lausch

Two sport professors among 10 worldwide to earn international research scholarships

Emily Sparvero and Joseph Mahan, assistant professors of sport management, each received the 2010 International Sport Management Conference Young Investigator Scholarship.

Of 10 recipients worldwide, Mahan and Sparvero were officially recognized at the annual International Sport Management Conference, held in November 2010 in Lausanne, Switzerland, home of the International Olympic Committees.

Sparvero’s research on the environmental impact on Olympic host communities was honored. Mahan, who explores social media in sport marketing, said his and Sparvero’s projects “are a natural fit with a conference that is bridging industry professionals and practitioners with scholars.”

“What I’ve always strived to do—and it’s the same thing for all of us here at SIRC—is bridge theory and practice,” Mahan said. — Meg Hughes

Study on fantasy baseball earns Best Paper from Sport Marketing Association

Assistant Professor Joris Drayer recently received an international Best Paper Award from the Sport Marketing Association (SMA) during its 2010 conference in New Orleans.

Drayer’s study on fantasy baseball participation, co-authored with Virginia Commonwealth University’s Brandon Doyer and Old Dominion University’s Stephen Shapiro, was chosen from 866 submissions worldwide for its significance to SMA membership, methodology and literature review.

Their winning paper, “Segmenting Motivation: An Analysis of Fantasy Baseball Motives and Mediated Sport Consumption,” developed classifications for fantasy baseball participants and explored sport consumption differences based on them. Four types of fantasy baseball participants were found: the hedonist, the opportunist, the moderate and the advocate.

— Chelsea Calhoun

Philadelphia Marathon pumps $15 million into economy, SIRC research finds

A SIRC survey has found that the 2009 Philadelphia Marathon pumped $15.4 million into the city’s economy and attracted thousands of affluent visitors who are likely to promote future tourism.

In a survey of race participants, Assistant Professors Jeremy Jordan and Emily Sparvero found that almost all respondents would recommend the event, while 65 percent of non-local runners would suggest Philadelphia for vacations.

In 2009, the marathon drew 29,212 visitors, including 13,715 non-Philadelphia residents. The event generated nearly $5.4 million in additional wages for city residents and created 1,082 part-time or temporary jobs.

SIRC is the exclusive research partner of the Philadelphia Marathon, one of only a few marathons nationwide owned and operated by a municipality. — JL

STHM helps revitalize tourism in Cape May

STHM faculty and students recently finished a partnership through which they helped re-shape tourism in Cape May, N.J., the nation’s oldest seashore resort.

The School of Tourism developed a comprehensive tourism strategy and a business plan for a new, $10.5 million convention center, slated to open in May 2012.

The partnership, passed unanimously by City Council, started in September 2009 and extended through March 2011.

Faculty members Florian Zach and Isi Tsuuyadiah created a series of visitor surveys to be distributed in Cape May’s hotels, shopping districts and at its festivals, as well as a survey for area residents. Tsuuyadiah also conducted a marketing analysis for the area.

As part of the tourism plan, STHM faculty helped Cape May create its first-ever convention and visitors bureau so the city could reach new markets and establish its own marketing strategy.

In the words of Mayor Ed Mahaney, STHM used “a grassroots-driven approach where the community drives the project through a series of questionnaires, interviews and public meetings.”

Students participated in data collection, facilitated discussions during public forums and may contribute in the training of convention center employees, according to partnership coordinator Wes Roehl.

“A project like this fits all of our missions—the teaching, research and service missions—that we have,” he said. — Staff report