

iamfresnostate_bryan~1ST PLACE AWARD



Courtesy of YouTube.com

IAMFRESNOSTATE wins awards

By Valerie Nevens

Last spring a new Web site was created to foster the needs of Fresno State students and alumni, and to host a Fresno State advertising campaign unlike any previously launched by other universities. This Web site was iamfresnostate.com.

The idea for the Web site was developed by Peter Robertson, Fresno State director of annual giving.

“A year ago when I watched the Super Bowl I was impressed with the Doritos/ Frito-Lay contest and came up with an advertising contest for students: to create the best video with the theme I Am Fresno State.” Robertson said.

Robertson said that the Web site itself is a portal with two primary links, one to YouTube where all the contenders' videos are showcased, and one to the IAMFRESNOSTATE MySpace page where networking and discussion about the videos takes place.

However the success of the Web site and video contest transformed the virtual hub into a hotspot for dozens of links, including links to Blackboard, the Save Mart Center, the Henry Madden Library and campus news sources like Fresno State News.

Winner of two Council for the Support of Education (CASE) awards – first place award for public relations and second place for best logo – the Web site outgrew even Robertson's expectations.

"It's all due to the strength of MySpace, which connected everyone, and the power of YouTube" Robertson said. "Plus Fresno State was the first university in the U.S. to do anything remotely like this contest and I really salute the administration for going forward with the idea."

As for the contest itself, advertisements were distributed around campus with flyers, e-mails and classroom announcements. Bryan Harley, first place winner of the contest, said he heard about it from one of his professors, Don Priest.

"I was familiar with the popular Mac vs. PC advertisements on television," Harley said. "I also have a lot of friends who went through the UC system and so I decided to do a parody of the popular ad with Fresno State vs. UC to show what separates Fresno State from UC campuses."

Other winners were selected by ballot voters at The Bucket. Second place winner Nick Lopes used 1,000 Post-It notes to spell out "I AM FRESNO STATE." Leslie Cooper's third place video portrayed the accomplishment felt at a college graduation ceremony.

There was also a viewer's choice category won by Graham Wahlburg, Marc DiTirro, Ryan Welch and Brandon Leong, who all combined efforts to write a jingle about their love of Fresno State. The four-some were later featured on KFSN ABC 30 news and KMPH FOX 26 news, making them local internet celebrities.

Robertson said that the jingle video has been viewed over 3,000 times, compared to average views of about 200 for administration-made videos like "Helping the Economy Grow" and "Educating our Children."

"Potential students and others looking at Fresno State don't want to hear how great the university is from the administration, but are more interested in the students' opinions," Robertson said.

With the IAMFRESNOSTATE MySpace having over 2,400 friends and the YouTube hits on all the winning videos totaling over 12,600, it's clear that both iamfresnostate.com and the contest have captured positive attention toward Fresno State and have brought the Fresno State community together.

"We're hoping to launch another contest this spring," Robertson said. "But we're still working on a budget and timeline that has yet to be approved."

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