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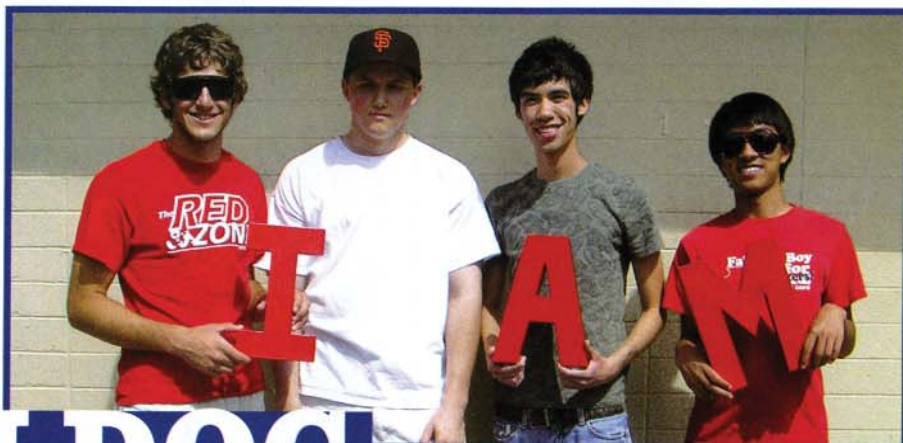


photo provided by Peter Robertson

BULLDOG bites

“I am Fresno State!”

Director of Annual Giving, Peter Robertson, fondly describes the recently developed “I Am Fresno State!” project as “feel good synergy created by students”. The university had been searching for innovative, low-cost but high-efficient outlets to promote Fresno State. An online video contest became the perfect solution. Fresno State tailored Frito Lay’s use of “consumer generated ads” for its own promotional purposes. Contestants created 30-second video clips showcasing their unique school spirit while maintaining a humorous level of integrity to boost university interest.

A panel of nine judges awarded senior Bryan Harley (1st place) \$350 for his comedic video segment, a take-off of the well-known “I’m a Mac vs. I’m a PC” commercials. In his clip, a Fresno State and UC student debate which university outshines each other’s. Harley highlights Fresno State’s distinguishing attributes and was careful to include Fresno State’s award-winning winery and the Save Mart Center. Additional award-winning clips were submitted by Nick Lopez (2nd place), Leslie Cooper (3rd place), and the team of Graham Wahlburg, Ryan Welch, Marf DiTirro and Brandon Leong (viewers’ choice). In the foursome’s video, they portray the university to be a fun, laidback and student-oriented campus while singing (and dancing) a quirky and goofy (yet catchy) tune they wrote titled “Fresno State, I Love You So!”

Fresno State proved itself savvy in the arena of marketability by launching and branding the contest on

popular websites MySpace and YouTube. The university’s promotional technique even received praise by The New York Times with an article highlighting the effectiveness of corporate marketing skills in the venue of education. Stuart Elliot reported Fresno State’s move as “an appropriate next

step, given that many of the consumers who are creating user-generated content are the tech-savvy members of Generation Y.” This project has also won two CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) awards, for communication campaign and logo/brand/image, which will be presented this December.

Peter Robertson, coordinator of the project and a three-time Fresno State graduate, proudly reports nearly 15,000 views of the “I Am Fresno State!” videos since they were posted on YouTube in March of this year. When considering the university spent only \$3,500 total on the project’s implementation, the viewers’ response is truly impressive. The national recognition of the “I Am Fresno State” project was never expected, but a welcomed surprise. Robertson hopes that the next contest be held during the spring 2008 semester. Students have already inquired about future entry submissions. Fresno State is pleased with the success of its promotional efforts and encourages all friends and fans of Fresno State to remain creative and enthusiastic with their Bulldog spirit. Watch all 10 video submissions online at www.iamfresnostate.com. ■

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Jaclyn Smith