

NPCC wins prestigious college advertising awards



The Sentinel-Record/Alison B. Harbour

ADVERTISING AWARD: Scott Crider, left, executive vice president of Combs & Co., Penny Thornton, advertising director at *The Sentinel-Record*, Dr. Susan Aldridge of National Park Community College, Linda Gilmore, advertising representative at *The Sentinel-Record*, and Ben Combs of Combs & Co., celebrate the awards they won in this year's Admissions Marketing Awards competition. They were honored for the college's new branding campaign, *Your Place to Learn*.

National Park Community College and Combs & Co. advertising won honors in this year's Admissions Marketing Awards competition for NPCC's new branding campaign, *Your Place To Learn*.

In its 20th year, the competition is sponsored by Admissions Marketing Report, a leading national higher education marketing publication. A panel of industry specialists reviews each entry by judging creativity, marketing execution and impact of message. The campaign included a newspaper insert and ads in *The Sentinel-Record*, radio commercials, and on-campus marketing tools, such as banners and posters.

"The heart and soul of the campaign came from the students, faculty and staff," said Ben Combs, president of the firm. "Prior to developing this new brand strategy, the agency conducted focus groups on campus to identify the strengths of the college."

In addition, the college and the newspaper were recognized with the Newspaper Advertising/Insert Award for NPCC's 2004 fall schedule, which introduced the new brand to the area.

"The campaign was a good partnership between the college, the agency and our media partners, especially *The Sentinel-Record*, which

is my favorite Arkansas newspaper," Combs said.

NPCC's award was in the total advertising campaign category which included both two-year and four-year institutions with 2,000 to 4,999 students. The accomplishment is noteworthy because NPCC competed against colleges with higher enrollments.

"We are proud and fortunate to have a close partnership with both Combs & Co. and *The Sentinel-Record*," said Dr. Susan Aldridge, assistant to the president at NPCC. "When the agency presented the proposed campaign to us, we knew the campus would embrace it. It clearly communicates our strengths as a community college and a place for people of all ages and interests to learn at the level and pace they desire."

Combs & Co., headquartered in Little Rock, is the leading marketer of higher education in Arkansas, representing organizations including the Association of Two-Year Colleges, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, and the University of Central Arkansas. Founded in 1972, the agency represents clients in education, retailing, tourism, information services, transportation, government, financial service, and nonprofit organizations.