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Arkansas

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University recruiters turn to mass media

BY HILARY HILLIARD
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Arkansas university administrators are willing to bet they know where high school and college-age kids are: at the movies, in front of the TV and next to the stereo.

They're banking on that presence to grow their schools — in numbers and dollars.

Over the past year state universities have turned from stale letters and brochures to flashy mass-media advertising for recruitment.

For local ads, "We go to cable channels that are watched by teens," said Henderson State

University President Charles Dunn. "Comedy Central, MTV, ESPN, TNT — our survey research showed that's what this audience watches."

Not only do burger joints and soda companies now battle for the demographic's loyalty, so do higher education institutions. They're forming campus brands, but also promoting the blanket concept of college education.

"We're in a very competitive student market," Dunn said, "a region of the state that is declining in population, which means we have to stake out a larger share of Little Rock,

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University of Central Arkansas President

Lu Hardin with Chicago Bulls player and UCA alumnus Scottie Pippen during the production of an ad featuring the two at the Bulls practice site in a Chicago suburb.