

OU

Inside
Movie makers | Laidlaw's legacy
Subtracting the angst from math class

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE | Fall 2011

Standing tall



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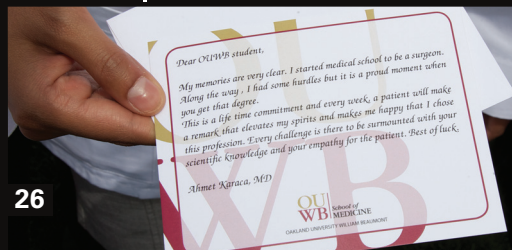


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Keith Benson is the first OU player to be drafted into the NBA.



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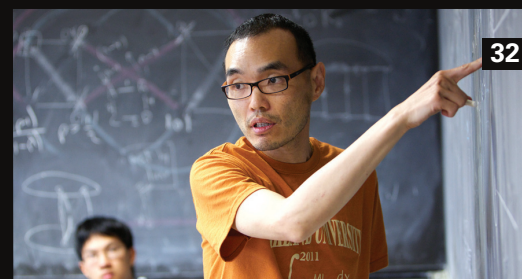
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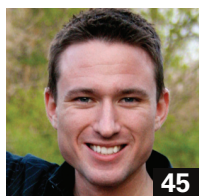
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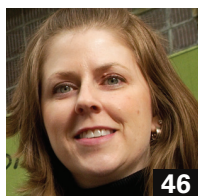
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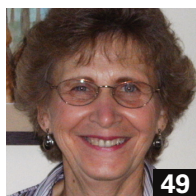
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KEEPER OF THE DREAM
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CELEBRATION

2012

Behind the stories



When OU men's basketball coach Greg Kampe spoke with our writer, Fritz Reznor, for the story on Keith Benson, he had no shortage of superlatives to offer about his star center. The now NBA-bound Benson had come to OU as a shy, somewhat undersized recruit. But given time, encouragement and Kampe's instruction — coupled with a late-stage growth spurt that pushed him up another four inches — Benson would transform into a ready-for-prime-time player.

Now Benson is set to make a bigger splash on a national scale with the Atlanta Hawks, giving Grizzlies fans a greater opportunity to see their school's first pro-drafted player work his court magic.

Yet it occurs to me that OU, too, is in the midst of a growth spurt that points toward future greatness. Like Benson, OU started out below the radar, overshadowed by the larger state universities of Michigan. Today, however, it's a different story.

As you'll read in this issue, OU's ascendance is very much evident on several fronts, including the recent launch of the OUWB School of Medicine, Michigan's first new M.D.-granting medical school in 47 years. The Republican Presidential Candidate Debate, held recently on campus, has also helped elevate public awareness of OU to a new level.

Meanwhile, our graduates, armed with degrees based on real-world experience, are out in the marketplace making news and names for themselves; like Robert Walters, the Quicken Loans executive and co-owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers, or "A-list" designer Shawn Ward.

Much of OU's upward trajectory can be credited to the continuing support of donors, like alumnus Gary Laidlaw, who is profiled in this issue and who has a unique perspective on OU, seeing both its past and future over his lifetime.

Still others are helping to raise OU's profile and are turning visions into reality with their contributions and support. Like pro-baller Benson, OU is just beginning to hit its stride — and is aiming to excel.

A handwritten signature of Kevin Knapp.

Kevin Knapp, Editor





Now a counselor and head swimming coach at Xavier College Preparatory, an all-girls high school in Phoenix, Ariz., Murphy has led Xavier Prep to the Arizona Division I state swimming championship each of the six years she has been there.

From classrooms to coaching

Albiero and Murphy both say that lessons learned in the OU classrooms have impacted their careers as coaches. "I ended up majoring in psychology," Albiero recalls, "because I had a great professor, Dr. Robert Stewart. Even though a sports psychology degree was not offered, Dr. Stewart went out of his way to create opportunities for me to pursue the connection between the subjects I enjoyed. The independent study he guided me on was definitely a catalyst in my development as a coach."

Murphy, a history major at OU, credits her instructors with her professional development, as well. "The class that impacted me most," Murphy recalls, "was (former OU associate professor) Kevin Early's sociology class. He had a keen awareness of the differences in the makeup of our fellow students, and he encouraged each of us to challenge our own preconceived notions of society. I believe his class has really helped me to work with different personalities in the team setting. I look back on what I learned from him and use it every day when dealing with team dynamics."

my freshman year, Tracy awarded me a scholarship based on my performance.

"I was always very grateful to OU for both my academic and athletic scholarship money," she adds, "and I was able to graduate college affordable and I was able to graduate today, the rising cost of education makes it essential that students for their academic and athletic order to be competitive in the swimmer to continue to support our swimmers!"

For information on how to help support University athletics through scholarships, visit oakland.edu/scholarships.

Coaches roster

Nearly a dozen Oakland University alumni have gone on to coaching careers. They include:

Darin Abbasse, CAS '86 – Lake Orion High School

Arthur Albiero, CAS '96 – swimming, University of

Jeff Cooper, CAS '90 –

Central Level Underst



Welcome to *OU Magazine's* Letters section. If you've read us in the past, you know we like to hear from our readers. Sometimes they comment on stories, sometimes they just drop us a line to share experiences they've had at OU. In this issue, we're happy to share comments from an alum about an OU swim coach. Drop us a note. We'd like to hear from you, too. oumag@oakland.edu

– LL

Accidental omission

I'm not the kind of person who criticizes without also complimenting. Let me congratulate Fritz Reznor on an excellent article "Talent Pool" in the recent *OU Magazine*. As a graduate of Oakland University, class of 1973, I am always proud of the accomplishments of other alumni that I read about in the magazine.

As a member of the swimming community, I was especially excited to read about the successes of Arthur Albiero and Colleen Murphy. My excitement continued to grow when I read the Coaches Roster sidebar, which listed the 11 other OU swimming and diving alumni who have gone on to careers in coaching.

However, my excitement turned into disappointment when I realized that Mr. Reznor had forgotten **Erica Zuercher, CAS '00**.

Erica swam at Oakland and was the team captain in 1999. Since graduation, Erica has gone on to coach high school boys and girls at Rochester High School, Utica Eisenhower High School and currently at Stoney Creek High School.

She is also the Head Coach for the Utica Shelby Swim Club and has developed several national level swimmers. The latest, Kayla Scott, was a Division II All-American for Wayne State, finishing 2nd at the nationals in Texas this past March.

Erica's life story is also interesting, as she has lived in many different states, but now makes Rochester her home. Erica has a strong connection to Oakland University and deserved to be included in Mr. Reznor's sidebar.

Sincerely,

Jim Prentis, Shelby Township, Mich.

Editor's Note: Thanks for helping us correct that oversight, Jim. Though Fritz's story was not intended to be a comprehensive listing, it's encouraging to know that former OU swim coaches continue to inspire others to action. Your letter provides a very nice overview of Ms. Zuercher's activities in recent years, so we'd like to share a photo of her in her OU days with our readers. As ever, we appreciate your comments. – KK ●



Erica Zuercher, CAS '00

Oakland University GRADUATE PROGRAMS



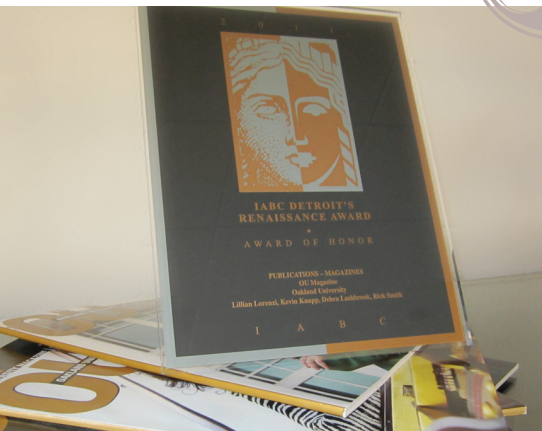


Photo courtesy of Julie Lemberger

OU Magazine wins IABC award

Oakland University's *OU Magazine* received an Award of Honor in the magazine category at this year's International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) 2011 Renaissance Awards in June.

The award was presented to executive editor Lillian Lorenzi and art director Debra Lashbrook for the magazine's 2010 issues. The ceremony was held at the Renaissance Center in Detroit.

OU Magazine is mailed to approximately 80,000 households across the country, comprised primarily of alumni, donors, friends, legislators, members of the media and other opinion leaders. The twice-yearly publication keeps readers updated on major events, initiatives, student activities, faculty achievements, and new academic and community outreach programs. ●



Amy Butler

Butler named director of OU INC

As Michigan aims to regain economic strength and grow innovative businesses, OU's business incubator welcomes a fresh direction with Amy Butler, the new executive director of

OU INC. Butler's new role encompasses the Rochester Hills/OU SmartZone Business Incubator, business accelerator and the university's Clean Energy Research Center. She will provide leadership and direction for high quality commercialization, capital investment programs, and services for OU INC, as well as its client companies and other

customer businesses of the incubator community.

An Oakland alumna, Butler spent 32 years serving the state government in Michigan, where she was director of the Bureau of Energy Systems for the Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth. ●

Topping out ceremony for HHB

Oakland University celebrated a milestone in the construction of its new Human Health Building (HHB) with a traditional "topping out" ceremony in July.

Students, staff, faculty and the construction team gathered at the northwest corner of OU's campus to witness the placing of the final steel beam at the top of the building. The crew and members of the campus community were able to sign the final whitewashed beam before it was raised.

The traditional topping out ceremony includes the placing of an evergreen tree at the top of the structure, to symbolize growth and to bring good luck.

The new 160,000-square-foot HHB is set to open its doors to students in the fall 2012 semester. It will house both the School of Nursing and the School of Health Sciences, and is part of Oakland's goal to transform health education and research in Southeast Michigan. ●

'After work' arts series debuts

This fall, a new performance series designed to fit busy schedules is giving patrons of the arts an opportunity to enjoy an "early night out" twice each month.

Thursday Arts-After-Work features the entire range of OU's performing arts

programs, with performances including students and faculty members in large and small music ensembles, an opera, plays, musical theatre, modern dance, soloist performers and guest artists.

The series provides a friendly place for friends, colleagues and neighbors to enjoy one another's company. Food and beverages are available for purchase on the mezzanine outside of Varner Recital Hall beginning at 5 p.m. on each event evening, and performances start at 6 p.m.

"Tickets to the Arts-After-Work series are offered for the unbeatable price of 'pay what you wish,'" says Jackie Wiggins, departmental chair of Music, Theatre and Dance. "Most events last approximately one hour, allowing plenty of time for an after-show dinner in a local restaurant or at home."

Tickets are available at the Varner Hall box office and online through Star Tickets at startickets.com. For the full schedule or more information, visit oakland.edu/artsafterwork or call (248) 370-2030. ●

OU Archives seeks material

While students at OU are focused firmly on the present and future, the Oakland University Archives is hoping to call some attention to the past.

It is seeking items related to the university's history — such as official records, papers, reports, minutes, publications, photographs, flyers, maps, etc. — to help augment the collection, which is housed in the Kresge Library.

"We're especially in need of anything related to sports or student life," says Linda Hildebrand, university archivist.

With some alums reaching the age where they may be seeking to downsize



their possessions, Hildebrand says it might be a great opportunity to submit OU-related items for donation.

"We can also make copies and return the originals if people intend to keep them," she says. "The important thing is to preserve them for the historical record, because once it's gone, it's gone forever."

For more information on donating material to the OU Archives, please contact Linda Hildebrand (248-370-2483 or hildebra@oakland.edu) or Shirley Paquette (248-370-2419 or paquette@oakland.edu).

INCubator receives \$400K grant

The Macomb County-Oakland University INCubator received a \$400,000 grant in June from the Department of Commerce's U.S. Economic Development Administration.

The grant was approved to help the INCubator offer support and resources to those businesses enrolled in its program. The aim is to help local businesses succeed in the areas of defense, homeland security and advanced manufacturing.

"The Macomb-OU INCubator is critical to helping drive small business innovation in southeast Michigan," says Sen. Debbie Stabenow, co-chairwoman of the Senate Manufacturing Caucus.

The Macomb-OU INCubator covers eight counties in Southeast Michigan. The grant will be used to renovate the building to accommodate new tenants at the site that previously was used as an early childhood education center.

Businesses accepted into the program then move into the INCubator building and operate their businesses from it.

The INCubator provides support and guidance to those businesses through a network of experts.

Allesee honored for philanthropy

Oakland University bestowed an honorary degree upon longtime philanthropist, volunteer and community activist Maggie Allesee during last spring's OU commencement ceremonies, in recognition of several decades of selfless commitment, compassion and hard work to improve the lives of others.

Allesee, 82, has embraced a lifetime of community service. She has earned the Michigan Humanitarian of the Year award, Project Hope Lifetime Achievement Award, American Lung Association Women's Committee Volunteer Award, HAVEN's Commitment to Mission award, and the United Way Heart of Gold. Over the years, she has donated more than \$15 million to various community organizations and causes.

At Oakland, Allesee serves on the Board of Visitors for the School of Nursing — where she has established an endowed chair in geriatrics and rehabilitation nursing — as well as on the Board of Visitors for the Eisenhower Dance Ensemble in the Department of Music, Theatre & Dance. She and her husband have supported the summer dance program, as well as the OU Dance Theatre and the OU Repertory Dance student concerts.

The dedicated benefactor also has served as director of the OU Foundation, a board member for Meadow Brook Theatre, a member of the Meadow Brook Hall Walk Committee, a planner of the Meadow Brook Hall Mode du Concours Fashion Show Luncheon, and a member of the President's Campaign Council.

Entrepreneurship minor at OU

Long before they start drafting a business plan, budding entrepreneurs at OU are researching, testing and fine-tuning the ideas that one day could result in new businesses. Oakland's School of Business Administration (SBA) began its new entrepreneurship minor this fall to support new growth and employment opportunities in Michigan.

"We really emphasize the development and refinement of ideas through the new courses," says Mark Simon, associate professor of marketing, who developed the minor in partnership with Ravi Parameswaran, professor of marketing and chair of the Department of Management and Marketing.

"The SBA's program strongly encourages students to build business models that match their goals, likes, skills and resources by following a detailed process," he says. "They find multiple ideas, refine them, and test the assumptions before selecting their final idea."

The SBA has offered an entrepreneurship minor in the past for non-business students. The new minor, however, is an all-new program that moves beyond the traditional curriculum to support the success of entrepreneurs today and tomorrow, Simon explains.

By offering the minor to business and non-business students, the SBA recognizes the importance and widespread interest of entrepreneurship across disciplines. This cross-disciplinary approach enhances classroom discussions and increases the knowledge base students will gain in the program, he adds.



Student organizations broaden the OU experience

Ask any university student or alum: there's more to college life than studies. At OU, an array of campus activities and services adds further dimension to the university experience.

More than 200 student organizations exist on campus today, ranging from recreation and club sports to social awareness and faith-based groups. The list covers a spectrum of interests and affinities, and many of them receive their funding through tuition fees. Yet, even in today's tight economic conditions, students continue to vote in support of funding the organizations, recognizing them for the value they can provide.

"These organizations all reflect the student body in some way and are a valuable complement to their classroom experiences," says Jean Ann Miller, director of student activities at OU. "It offers students the opportunity to get involved in 'real world' roles and responsibilities, such as politics, journalism, broadcasting and filmmaking, which allows them to step more confidently into leadership positions in their future careers."

Miller, who as an undergraduate was involved with the Concert-Lecture Board (now renamed the Student Program Board), says students who take on leadership roles in campus organizations can acquire skills that help them become successful leaders in life.

"It's amazing to see students transform into leaders who may be among our next generation of CEOs," she notes.

For Bryan Barnett, SBA '98, the experience he acquired as a member of Student Congress has paid a handsome dividend. The current mayor of Rochester Hills, Mich., says he credits his OU student government service with laying the groundwork for his current position as a community leader.

"Participating in student organizations was one decision that positively impacted my life in many substantial ways," he explains. "The Student Congress, the Student Program Board, and the Walt Disney College Program — OU Chapter all gave me the confidence to practice leadership, as well as form

friendships and networks that still benefit me today."

For Aaron Segel, a junior from Royal Oak, Mich., working in film production as part of Student Video Productions (SVP) means learning real-world skills that may translate into a career opportunity.

"We learn video and film production through a hands-on approach," he explains. "Thanks to student funding, we're able to use high-quality equipment, so there will be no learning curve associated with stepping up to the pro ranks."

Heather Haughey, SVP staff adviser, says having marketable skills already in place makes a big difference to prospective employers. "Experience is what sets some job-seekers apart from others," she says. "Any advantage you have in today's job market is a big plus."

For more information, visit oakland.edu/csa and click on "Student Organizations." ●

Photo by Jason Willis



Kerri Schuiling Adriene Lim

New deans welcomed

The School of Nursing welcomes its new dean, Kerri Schuiling, Ph.D. She comes to OU from Northern Michigan University, where she was the associate dean and director of the School of Nursing. Dean Schuiling played a pivotal role in the development of the school's Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree program.

Certified as a nurse-midwife and women's health care nurse practitioner, Dean Schuiling has received several awards for her work in women's health including induction as a fellow in the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM). She was a recipient of the ACNM's Kitty Ernst award presented in recognition for innovative, creative endeavors in midwifery and women's health care.

She is the co-editor of the book *Women's Gynecological Health*, which received the ACNM Book of the Year award. Most recently, Dean Schuiling was selected for fellowship in the American Academy of Nursing.

Adriene Lim has joined OU's literary and university community as dean of Kresge Library. She will be responsible for all library administration, including strategic visioning and planning, fostering staff and professional growth, and continuing

to integrate the library into the intellectual life of the university.

A Michigan native, Lim served most recently as the interim university librarian at Portland State University in Oregon. She has published articles and given presentations about technology, diversity and other topics at the national, state and local levels, and has been active in the Library and Information Technology Association and the Association of College and Research Libraries divisions of the American Library Association.

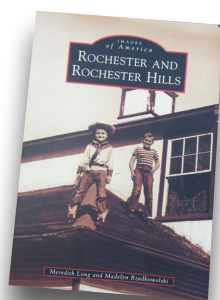
Lim holds a master's degree in Library and Information Science and a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, both summa cum laude, from Wayne State University. ●

Hall staffers author history book

A new book featuring historical photographs and information about Rochester and Rochester Hills, Mich., was recently authored by two members of the Meadow Brook Hall staff.

Meredith Long and Madelyn Rzadkowsky created *Images of America: Rochester and Rochester Hills* after six months' work combining historical information with rarely seen images of the area.

Long is curator at Meadow Brook Hall, and Rzadkowsky is events and programs coordinator. Both are involved in writing text for exhibits and marketing at Meadow Brook Hall.



The book was published by Arcadia Publishing as part of its "Images of America" series. The series highlights the history of towns, corporations, buildings and even ethnic groups by using historic photographs accompanied by captions.

The book is available at Meadow Brook Hall's Museum Shop. For more information on Meadow Brook Hall, visit www.meadowbrookhall.org. ●

Dean pens book chapter

One of Oakland University's newest deans is keeping busy with several manuscripts in the works. Louis Gallien, Ph.D., dean of the School of Education and Human Services, saw one such work published this past spring.

As a scholar, Dr. Gallien's research centers on African American culture, history, religion and pedagogy. His degrees in African American history and theology made him an ideal candidate to collaborate on a new book, *Afropentecostalism and Its Changing Discourses*.

Dr. Gallien contributed a chapter, in which he looks at the careers of three famous musicians and explains the degree of conflict and ambivalence that they faced when each decided to leave behind his roots in gospel music and the music of the Pentecostal church to move into the realm of secular music.

His chapter is called "Crossing Over Jordan: Navigating the Music of Heavenly Bliss and Earthly Desire in the Careers of Sam Cooke, Donny Hathaway and Marvin Gaye." The book was edited by Amos Yong and Estrela Alexander and published by New York University Press. ●

Compiled by Kevin Knapp

Schostak family pledges \$1 million to School of Medicine



The Schostak family (standing, from left): Lillian, Mark, Elise, David, Robert, Nancy and Jeff Schostak, Rachel Prinstein. Seated: Elyse and Jerome Schostak.

Robert Schostak remembers well the days when he was a student at OU. At the time, he was juggling a lot — newly married, working a day job with his family's commercial real estate business, and commuting to Rochester to take evening courses toward a degree.

"I had a lot on my plate," recalls Schostak, CAS '78, "but the flexibility I had in attending Oakland University as a commuter student really helped me realize my dreams. It was a tremendous resource that I've never forgotten."

Today, Schostak is the co-chairman and chief executive officer of Schostak Brothers & Company, Inc. of Livonia, Mich. His family's Schostak Family Philanthropic Foundation recently made a \$1 million pledge to the new Oakland

University William Beaumont School of Medicine.

"My family believes strongly in giving back to the community," Schostak explains. "The new medical school is a logical and appropriate choice for the donation, because it can contribute to the economic development of all of Oakland County. And, as an alumnus of OU, it feels good to be supporting such an important phase in the school's development."

Not only did the donation help get the new medical school off to a positive start, the deferred gift is also unrestricted — allowing Oakland University and Beaumont Health System the freedom to support their new school of medicine wherever the need is greatest.

"My family has great confidence in Dr. (Robert) Folberg's leadership and also in President (Gary) Russi, in where he wants to take the university," Schostak says. "We trust them both as professionals to know how best to use the gift to bring the most value to the medical school."

Dr. Folberg, founding dean of the OUWB School of Medicine, acknowledged the gift, saying, "The pledge will have a lasting impact on the educational mission of our new school. We're grateful to the Schostak Family for their support."

The Schostak Family Foundation's \$50,000 pledge in 2007 helped OU establish a Judaic studies minor in the College of Arts and Sciences, with the aim of fostering better understanding, tolerance and a broader knowledge base of the world for future students.

For the Schostaks, philanthropy is part of a shared family philosophy. They have supported a variety of civic and charitable organizations throughout metropolitan Detroit. The Schostak Family Philanthropic Foundation places a strong emphasis on education, providing scholarships and other support for institutions such as the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, University of Michigan, Oakland University and Wayne State University. ●

Kellogg grant supports summer school

This past summer, OU's School of Education and Human Services hosted a Freedom School Summer Program in downtown Detroit with the support of a \$97,000 W.K. Kellogg Foundation Grant. The program provided a safe and fun learning environment for 70 children from Detroit, which included reading enrichment programs, music and dance workshops, and social action projects.

The program was developed by the Children's Defense Fund, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the welfare of children in America. OU's grant allowed for the first hosted program in Southeast Michigan, which was held at the Nsoroma Institute, a Detroit charter school with an African-centered curriculum.

The six-week summer program was staffed by college students and recent college graduates from the community,

including one OU alumna. The young adults encouraged a love of reading and experiential learning, developed leadership skills while directing classroom discussions, and were able to create a positive and exciting summer experience for the attending children.

"Being able to establish and operate a Freedom Schools Summer Program is an important undertaking, and the return has been invaluable," says Louis Gallien, dean, School of Education and Human Services. "The Kellogg Foundation grant made this summer's program a complete success, and we hope we can continue to make a difference in these children's lives." ●



Pawley family earmarks estate gift to new medical school

Two of Oakland University's most earnest and dedicated supporters, Dennis and Carlotta Pawley, extended an already tremendous history of generosity with an estate gift of \$738,000 to the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine.

"This gift is truly remarkable, particularly when one considers how much the Pawleys have already done for Oakland," says University President Gary Russi. "This latest example of their ongoing philanthropy will go a long way in helping us ensure that the School of Medicine evolves as an innovative, rigorous and community-minded medical school."

Dennis Pawley, SEHS '82, began his affiliation with OU as a student in the School of Education and Human Services. Since graduating and crafting a successful career that saw him rise to executive vice president for what was then the Chrysler Corporation, he has served on the Oakland University Foundation Board of Directors, as a member and chair of the university Board of Trustees, and as a co-chair of *Innovation and Opportunity — The Campaign for OU*.

Pawley was a member of the Board of Trustees at the time the university was in negotiations for the School of Medicine with Beaumont Health System. As such, he was heavily involved in setting up the structure of the new school.



Carlotta and Dennis Pawley

"The medical school will not only help the state of Michigan with what's going to be a huge shortage of doctors, but also will enhance Oakland University's brand and reputation as a national university," he says. "I hope this gift will support the growth of not only the medical school, but the university in general." ●

Gift allows high school students to pursue education careers

Former School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) Interim Dean Bill Keane, Ph.D., and his wife, Gerry, have made a generous gift in memory of Gerry's sister, Irene Demarest, which will allow graduates of Berkley High School in Berkley, Mich., to pursue a career in education at Oakland University.

As a professor serving on Oakland's Senate Academic and Honors Committee, Dr. Keane (who also served as superintendent of Berkley Schools from 1971-1980 and the Oakland Intermediate School District from 1980 to 1994) noticed the tremendous difficulties many students in academic difficulty faced working a job in addition to holding a full class schedule. As Bill neared retirement, the Keanes decided to provide scholarship support that would allow students to devote more time to their studies.

"We thought if we could do something to help a student avoid working so many hours, we would be doing a great thing in this life," says Dr. Keane.

The Keanes inherited a retirement account upon Irene's passing, and, combining this money with other funds, established the Keane/Demarest Endowed Scholarship in the SEHS. In



Bill and Gerry Keane

doing this, the Keanes not only have made a lasting impact on the university, but continued a family tradition of honoring loved ones with philanthropic contributions.

The Keanes used an IRA rollover, which allowed them to transfer funds from a retirement account to the university with no taxes or penalties. To take advantage of this opportunity, which lasts through 2011, donors must be at least 70 ½ years of age, and request the transfer of funds as a charitable distribution.

In establishing their gift, the Keanes sought to benefit two institutions which had become dear to them over the course of Bill's career in Michigan: Oakland University and the Berkley School District. The scholarship, which the SEHS will begin awarding during the 2012-2013 school year, will fund up to half a year's tuition for its recipient.

Berkley Schools Superintendent Michael Simeck notes that, while the school system has received other scholarships from donors, the Keanes' gift is the first endowment to which Berkley students have access. Because of the lasting nature of an endowed fund, the scholarship will be available to students in perpetuity.

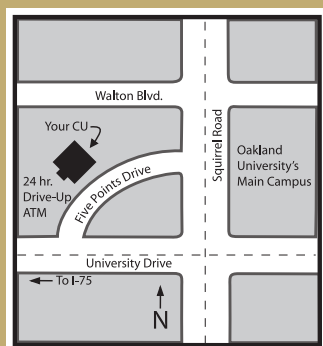
"Dr. and Mrs. Keane have made many great contributions to the Berkley School District," says Simeck, "and we encourage the many people positively affected by their work to increase the fund in their honor."

Currently, the Berkley School District is working with Oakland University to build a community match to the Keanes' gift toward the goal of allowing the scholarship to cover an entire year's tuition. ●

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The Gold Standard

Claude Baillargeon, Ph.D., associate professor of art history, is the curator of the international art exhibition *Revolutionizing Cultural Identity: Photography and the Changing Face of Immigration*, currently on display at the Canadian Museum of Immigration in Nova Scotia. Eleven artists from the United States and Canada expressed personal testimony affirming their own cultural identity through contemporary photography. The diverse backgrounds of the artists reflect globalization and its impact on society.

Aaron Bird, Ph.D., assistant professor of occupational safety and health (SHS), collaborated with **Kristin Landis-Piwowar** of the Biomedical Diagnostics program (SHS), Pontiac-based 3D-ETC, and Hollywood and New York City film experts to produce a 3D movie on the standard procedures for performing blood draws. Viewers experience the video and audio content of the film while wearing immersive stereographic 3D headsets. Bird and collaborators are studying the impact of this immersive video approach on improving learning outcomes.

Dominique Daniel, Ph.D., assistant professor, Kresge Library information literacy and reference librarian, applied her faculty research award toward her study of the ways archives and libraries collect materials on ethnic history in the United States and Canada. After analyzing thousands of archival documents Daniel wrote "The Politics of Ethnic Heritage Preservation in Canada: The Case of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario." Daniel's paper will be published in spring 2012 in *Information & Culture: A Journal of History*.

Timothy Larrabee, Ph.D., associate professor of education, was chosen from among thousands of educators across the nation to be one of only ten awardees of the inaugural Chevrolet GREEN Educator Award. He was cited for his work with Earth Force and the Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN). Dr. Larrabee teaches courses in the elementary science education program and is well known at OU for his social advocacy work.

Thomas Lauer, Ph.D., professor of management information systems, organized a multi-disciplinary group of approximately 25 OU faculty members from philosophy, engineering, health science, business disciplines and sociology to explore the issues of surveillance, privacy and security. The result was the creation of the SurPriSe Learning Community. Additionally, Lauer and the others received the university's support and earned Faculty Learning Community status to further explore how different perspectives shape one's views on these three issues.

Fatma Mili, Ph.D., professor and chair of computer science and engineering, received the Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Award from the Michigan ACE Network. The award recognizes outstanding leadership and advocacy of women in higher education. Mili's mentoring of women to diversify the fields of computer science and engineering along with her work with the Anita Borg Institute of Women in Technology and the Computer Research Association and additional outreach efforts earned her the honor.

J. Austin Murphy, Ph.D., professor of finance, and **Joe Callaghan**, Ph.D., professor of accounting, co-chaired OU's first international conference on credit analysis and risk management in July. They brought academic and industry experts from around the world to OU's campus to discuss important issues related to credit and risk. The group especially focused on how the processes for credit evaluation could be improved.

Ron Piscotty, Ph.D., RN-BC and special instructor of nursing, is a current co-investigator on three grants totaling \$8,000 supporting the development of a Caring Studio at Oakland University School of Nursing. He works closely with the study investigators on all aspects of the project, including developing the statistical models and planning the Caring Studio sessions. The sessions teach nursing students how to build relationships with their patients in order to improve quality and safety.

Linda Tyson, special instructor and coordinator of art education, earned the 2012 Michigan Higher Education, Art Educator Award from the Michigan Art Education Association for her leadership of visual arts education at OU and in the community. For the past 10 years, Tyson has taught OU courses on art education for elementary teachers and method courses for art education majors. She also is the co-director of OU Summer Art Intensive for high school students.

Robert Van Til, Ph.D., professor of engineering and chair of the Department of Industrial Systems and Engineering, was awarded a Pawley Institute Fellowship, which was given to support research that advances knowledge and theories of lean learning, as well as to facilitate the work of educating university students about lean principles. Over the summer, Dr. Van Til developed a project aimed at making Crittenton Hospital Medical Center's storage system more efficient, with a lean culture in mind. ●

By Michele Jasukaitis



Erika Polidori



Michael Coriasso



Alanna Gerber



Steven Marcinkowski

Softball

The Golden Grizzlies, under first-year head coach LaDonia Hughes, finished 17-29 overall, 8-16 in Summit League play. Senior **Marisa Everitt** and freshman outfielder **Shelby Gott** both were named to the All-Summit League first team. Everitt batted .271 as a first-baseman-outfielder and was OU's top pitcher with a 7-8 record and a 2.91 earned run average, while Gott batted .362 and became only the third freshman in school history to be named first team all-league. Sophomore second baseman **Erin Galloway** and freshman catcher **Erika Polidori** both earned second team All-Summit League honors. Season highlights included a 5-3 win over Michigan State; turning the first triple play in school history, against South Carolina State; and junior **Kelsey Krych** breaking the OU career record for stolen bases. She currently has 72. ●

Men's golf

The Golden Grizzlies placed two players on the All-Summit League first team for the first time in school history as both junior **Michael Coriasso** and sophomore **Jakob Ziegler** were named to the all-league first team. In addition, sophomore **Phil Giesecker** was second team all-league, and senior **Michael Marks** was named to the 2011 Cleveland Golf/Srixon All-America Scholar Team. A two-time all-league golfer, Coriasso won his first collegiate tournament last spring at the Battle at the Warren hosted by Notre Dame. Ziegler set a single-season school record with 14 rounds under par and posted The Summit League's top scoring average of 72.37, the fourth lowest single-season average in OU history. The Golden Grizzlies finished eighth at The Summit League Championship as Coriasso tied for 10th place individually and Ziegler tied for 12th. ●

Women's golf

Seeded eighth out of 10 teams entering its league tournament, the OU women's golf team took third place at the 2011 Summit League Championship. Junior **Liz Ecker** became the first Oakland University women's golfer named All-Summit League in three consecutive seasons, earning all-league second team honors. Sophomore **Mara Kovac** placed third at The Summit League Championship and was named to the all-tournament team. Her first round 71 was the lowest score ever by a Golden Grizzly at the league tournament, and her three-day, 54-hole total of 224 was the second lowest in school history at the league championship. Sophomore **Alanna Gerber** tied for 10th, and Ecker finished 12th at the league championship. All three were named to the 2010-2011 National Golf Coaches Association All-American Scholar Team. ●

Track and field

The Oakland University women's track and field team placed fifth at The Summit League Indoor Championships, the team's best finish ever at the league championship meet. The distance medley relay team of **Autumn Cleverley**, **Desiree Pettiford**, **Megan Enzor** and **Erica D'Angelo** placed second, while **Micah Jones** was third in the triple jump and **Sara Lieblin** was third in the 3,000-meter run. The OU men's team took sixth place and had three individuals place third in their respective events: **Kevin Luce** in the 60-meter hurdles; **Zack Jones** in the 5,000-meter run; and **Andrew Stebbins** in the shot put. Both teams placed seventh at The Summit League Outdoor Championships. **Kelsey Carmean** took second in the 10,000 meter run, **Lia Jones** was runner-up in the 5,000-meter run, and Cleverley took third in the 800-meter run for the OU women. **Steven Marcinkowski** took third place in the

steeplechase, Luce was third in the 110-meter hurdles, and Zack Jones third in the 5,000-meter run in the men's league championship meet. ●

Baseball

The Oakland University baseball team posted a 19-31 overall record, including a win over Big Ten regular season co-champion Michigan State, and was 10-18 in Summit League games. Senior second baseman **Tommy Jablonski** and senior catcher **Ryan Waldhart** both were named first team All-Summit League. Jablonski, who was second team all-league the previous two years, batted .344, scored 25 runs, and led the Golden Grizzlies with 15 doubles. He finished his career with 188 hits, fourth most in OU history. Waldhart batted .303 in 2011, scored 27 runs and knocked in 27. Sophomore **Mike Carson** led the team with six home runs, while junior **Tim Ryan** scored a team-high 41 runs. Senior **Aaron Wick** became the first player in the school's Division I era to toss a nine-inning, complete game shutout with a 4-0 blanking of Western Michigan. ●

Women's tennis

The OU women's tennis team improved from a 1-17 mark in 2010 to 6-10 in 2011, including a 4-4 record in Summit League matches. Senior **Amanda Pettey** was 6-3 in dual match play at No. 6 singles and became only the fifth women's tennis player in school history to be named the league's Player of the Week. Freshman **Grace Keating** led the squad in singles wins with an 8-12 mark, including a 4-4 league record playing primarily at No. 4 singles, while junior **Karen Karoub** posted a 7-6 dual match record at No. 3 singles. OU's No. 1 doubles team of senior **Jackie Dinicu** and junior **Caitlin Young** and its No. 3 team of Keating/Pettey both were 4-7 in dual matches. ●



Autumn Cleverley



Tommy Jablonski



Amanda Pettey

25th Hall of Honor class

Longtime and highly successful Oakland University coaches **Pete Hovland** and **Greg Kampe** will be inducted into the Hollie L. Lepley Athletic Hall of Honor during its Silver Anniversary celebration Jan. 27, 2012, as part of Oakland's fourth annual Homecoming. Hovland is in his 33rd season as OU's head swimming and diving coach, while Kampe is in his 28th year as the head of the men's basketball program. Along with honoring the two new members, Oakland will pay tribute to the former Hall of Honor inductees from the past 24 classes. Awards also will also be presented to **Craig, SBA '84**, and **Ann Stinson, SBA '83**, and **Dr. Robby Stewart** for their significant contributions to the OU athletic department. For more information on the Hall of Honor, go to ougrizzlies.com/hall-honor. ●

Men's basketball on TV

The men's basketball game between the Golden Grizzlies and the University of Tennessee scheduled for Nov. 28 was to be telecast on ESPNU, the first ever nationally televised home basketball game in school history. OU will have three other games televised on Fox Sports Detroit this season: Dec. 10 at either 1 or 4 p.m. against the University of Michigan at The Palace of Auburn Hills, and home games at the O'rena against Summit League foes South Dakota State Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. and against Indiana-Purdue-Ft. Wayne Feb. 11 at noon. ●

Grizzly Tracks

Oakland finished second out of the ten teams in The Summit League's Commissioner's Cup standings for 2010-2011, its highest finish ever in the school's 12-year history with the league. The Golden Grizzlies tallied 97 total points, a half point behind South Dakota

State's 97.5, and won a league-best five regular season team championships: women's soccer, women's cross country, men's basketball and both men's and women's swimming and diving ... Seniors **Zack Jones** (men's cross country/track and field) and **Brittany Dunn** (volleyball) received the 2011 Hollie L. Lepley Award at the annual Graduate and Champions banquet. The honor goes to those student-athletes who have accomplished the highest athletic achievement, academic achievement and community service ... Four Golden Grizzlies are among The Summit League's Top 30 Distinguished Contributors as part of the league's 30th anniversary season in 2011-2012. The four OU representatives are: **Pete Hovland**, 12-time Summit League Swimming and Diving Coach-of-the-Year; two-time All-American basketball player and two-time Summit League Player-of-the-Year **Keith Benson, BIS '11**; All-American and two-time Summit League women's soccer Co-Player-of-the-Year **Anita Rapp, CAS '02**; and three-time All-American swimmer and two-time Summit League Swimmer of the Championships **Marcin Unold, CAS '11** ... Oakland placed a league-high 152 student-athletes on The Summit League Winter/Spring All-Academic teams for 2010-2011. Fifty-five OU student-athletes earned the distinction of Scholar-Athlete by earning a 3.6 or better GPA ... OU has hired three new coaches for the 2011-12 year: **Russ Cunningham** is the new men's and women's head golf coach; **Stephen Gorton** joins the Golden Grizzlies' men's soccer staff as an assistant coach; and **Monique Johnson** has been named assistant softball coach. In addition, **Tim Dameron** is OU's new Coordinator of Promotions, Marketing and Ticketing for athletics, and **Aaron Epstein** joins the staff as Coordinator of the Golden Grizzlies Athletic Fund and

V.I.P. programs ... **Brittany Carnago**, a senior on the OU women's basketball team, received the inaugural Division I-AAA Athletic Director's Association (ADA) Postgraduate Scholarship. Carnago, who earned her B.S. degree in sociology and psychology in December 2010, is pursuing her M.A. in counseling ... After 13 years of service and dedication, **Simon Dover** has been elevated to Senior Associate Athletic Director. In his new position, Dover will be in charge of day-to-day operations and will continue to be responsible for implementing strategic planning initiatives, contract negotiations and managing the multi-million dollar athletic budget. ●

Endowed scholarship recipients

Eight Golden Grizzly student-athletes received endowed scholarships for the 2011-2012 school year based on their athletic and academic accomplishments:

Nancy & Hugh Elliott Endowed Scholarship: **Ashleigh Slemmer**, volleyball.

Addison Brink Jr. Endowed Scholarship: **Jenna Lange**, volleyball.

Department of Athletics Endowed Scholarship: **Cassandra Peterson**, women's cross country/track and field.

Lori A. Macauley Endowed Scholarship: **Travis Bader**, men's basketball.

Daniel R. Weinerth Endowed Scholarship: **Nick Kristock**, men's soccer.

R. Michael O'Brien Endowed Scholarship: **Johnny Dreshai**, men's soccer.

Endowed Scholarship for Women's Basketball: **Brittany Carnago** and **Sharise Calhoun**. ●

Compiled by Fritz Reznor

Photos courtesy of OU Athletics Communications

Movie makers

Hollywood producer helps align stars for OU's cinema studies program *By Mary Gunderson-Switzer*



Hollywood producer Michael Manasseri brings years of movie-making experience to bear, as OU students gain hands-on experience in the art of filmmaking and editing.

The Great Lakes, the Motown sound, the Mackinac Bridge and — *filmmaking*?

That's right, filmmaking. Hollywood producer Michael Manasseri wants movie making to become synonymous with Michigan. He's not just wishing; he's busy bringing show business — and jobs — to the state. And his grand plan includes a supporting role for OU.

"I plan to produce one film here each year," says Manasseri, who's enjoyed a successful career as an actor, director and producer. Since 2009, he's worked in conjunction with OU's cinema studies program to engage its faculty and students in the making of his films.

Last year, Manasseri directed the sci-fi comedy *Sucker*, produced by Big Screen Michigan, with sets built at OU. This year, he co-produced a teenage zombie comedy, *Detention of the Dead*, filmed in nearby Pontiac, Mich.

So why is a mover-and-shaker from Tinseltown bent on bringing the magic of the silver screen to Rochester?

"For a start, Michigan's film incentives were very good, so that was an attraction," he says. "But I also missed my

family here. In addition, I wanted to give back to OU because of all the university has done for my family. I'd like to play a part in making OU a premier film school."

Ties that bind

From someone else, that might sound like a pipe dream. But Manasseri is no idle dreamer. He grew up on the East Coast, acting in high school before debuting in Broadway's *Oliver!* and with the late Yul Brenner in *The King and I*.

At 17, Manasseri moved to California to pursue acting. Perhaps his most recognized role was as Wyatt in the 1994 TV series *Weird Science* ("I'll never get away from that," he laughs). He's also been in *Wings*, *The Wonder Years*, *Charles in Charge*, *Quantum Leap*, *ER*, *Sliders*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Yes, Dear*.

He's played roles in the movies *License to Drive* and *Thank Heaven*, and, in 2007, directed his first film, *Babysitter Wanted*, which premiered at Spain's Sitges Film Festival.

But familial ties remained strong, and he felt that tug growing stronger.

“My two younger siblings were homeschooled, and my family was living in Texas when they were awarded OU scholarships: a swimming scholarship for my brother, Jason, (BIS '09), and a musical theatre scholarship for my sister, Chelsea, (CAS '09),” he says. “My parents moved to Rochester Hills when my siblings started at OU.”

What began with Manasseri offering his siblings film experience grew into a partnership with OU's cinema studies program. That has resulted in student internships — 30 of them, so far — with on-the-job film-set training.

“I find that OU students are respectful and enthusiastic about learning,” says Manasseri, who — though he continues to co-partner Big Screen Entertainment in Los Angeles — has now moved to Rochester Hills.

Class act

The OU connection was developed rapidly, thanks to a faculty and curriculum that permits flexibility required for such ventures.

“Our program's very integrated,” explains Andrea Eis, chair of Art and Art History and member of OU's cinema studies executive committee. “We connect student coursework with work on a film production set, and students parlay what they learn on-set into classroom projects.”

Some of those students, in fact, filmed a behind-the-scenes documentary special feature for the *Detention of the Dead* DVD release.

At the same time, coursework in film history, film theory, video production and screenwriting — coupled with a professional film production company — prepares students for real-world jobs, a move that could help combat

the loss of top-notch graduates to employment outside the state.

“Not only does Michael give students experience to pursue jobs in Michigan,” says Eis, “but he's also hired some recent grads.”

The work can be a nightmare, however, as several OU students found out.

School ghouls

“We were zombies,” say cinema studies seniors Geneva Brunetti and Alex Nardelli, referring to being cast as extras in *Detention of the Dead*.

Spooky work, maybe, but Brunetti and Nardelli were also involved as film production assistants. “We weren't ‘grab-me-coffee’ people,” Brunetti says. “We learned everything about on-set filming.”

Between working with Manasseri and meeting actors on set who starred in shows like *Glee*, *Twilight*, *Greek* and *Zoey 101*, the experience was surreal.

“The first day on set was the hardest,” Nardelli admits. “I was nervous standing in for actors ... I bumped into the director ... I didn't know any of the industry etiquette.”

In time, they gained confidence. After the behind-the-scenes documentary was filmed, Manasseri asked Brunetti and Nardelli to help edit it. The students are also juggling other film projects.

But whether assisting actors, coordinating extras, helping the camera crews or serving as couriers, “the work on the set is a real learning experience,” says Brunetti.

A future in filmmaking in Michigan may not be so far-fetched after all. ■

Mary Gunderson-Switzer is a freelance writer living in Warner Robins, Ga.



OU students Alex Nardelli and Geneva Brunetti (left and center) discuss filming of the next movie sequence with Andrea Eis, chair of Art and Art History, and director Manasseri. At right, the footage is edited by students in an on-campus studio.

Keeping the dream alive

Keeper of the Dream scholarship award celebrates 20th anniversary *By Susan Thwing*

When Bridget Green, CAS '98, began attending Oakland University, she had one character trait that would ensure her success: she wasn't afraid to ask for help.

And help she would get: from student affairs, a number of student organizations and the Office of Equity (now the Center for Multicultural Initiatives). She also received a key boost from what was then a little-known award — the Keeper of the Dream scholarship.

Taking its name from the famous speech by the late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Keeper of the Dream (KOD) award was established in 1993 to recognize OU students who contribute to interracial understanding and goodwill. The value of the award can vary, depending on sponsorships. Applicants must demonstrate not only academic achievement but also exceptional leadership qualities through their involvement on campus and in the community by breaking down racial and cultural stereotypes and by promoting unity among all people to foster a campus environment rich in diversity and multiculturalism.

Since its inception, more than 80 students from a variety of academic majors have been awarded KOD scholarships — students just like Bridget Green, who received the award in 1994.

Full circle

"When I came to OU, I was a novice," she says. "As much as they wanted to, my parents didn't know how to help me. I didn't know anything about scholarships or loans, and I was doing it all on my own. But I connected with people right away at orientation, and I knew how to ask for help."

Those connections led to her becoming a very involved student, including serving as chair of the Student Activities Funding Board, as a Resident Assistant in the residential halls, and as an Orientation Assistant.

It also led to Green being nominated for the Keeper of the Dream award, which she sees as an acknowledgment of the difference being involved can make. Since then, Green has "paid it forward" by circling back to OU in her career, as assistant director of the Center for Multicultural Initiatives (CMI), and most important, supporting students who need extra help.

"CMI helps students who were like me; students who need assistance in making effective use of all of the resources available to them," she says. "Our goal is to help students succeed to graduation."

Knowing from personal experience how important that support can be makes her work in the CMI all the more rewarding, Green says.

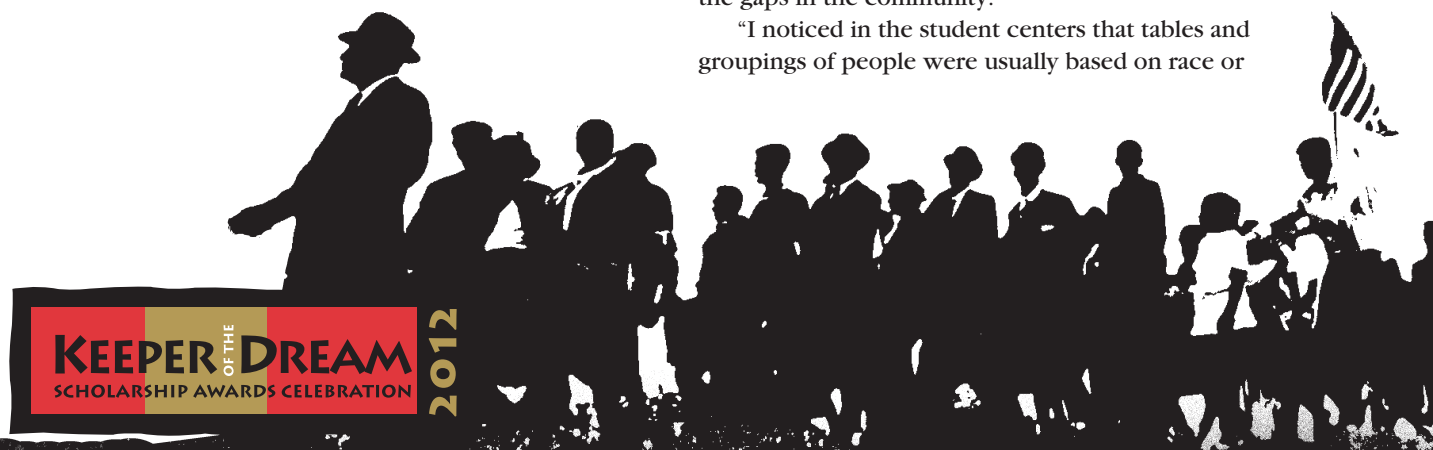
"I am in the middle, between the student and the support they need to fulfill their potential," she says. "Sometimes I feel like a parent watching the students grow, and it brings tears to my eyes when I see them succeed. But one of the highlights of my year is making that call to tell a student they have received a Keeper of the Dream scholarship."

Bridge builder

Steven Townsend, Ph.D., CAS '05, was a 2003 recipient of the KOD scholarship. He was a chemistry student at OU; now he works as a postdoctoral researcher at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Receiving the scholarship was more than a financial bonus, he says; it was an affirmation. "It told me I was doing the right things," he recalls.

Those things included introducing himself to strangers and being proactive in getting to know individuals of other races in order to build awareness of each other and bridge the gaps in the community.

"I noticed in the student centers that tables and groupings of people were usually based on race or





Keeper of the Dream award recipient and OU alumna Bridget Green seeks to “pay it forward” by helping students realize their potential.

ethnicity. So I would go sit at tables at random with the sole purpose of getting to know someone different than me, and having them get to know me,” he says.

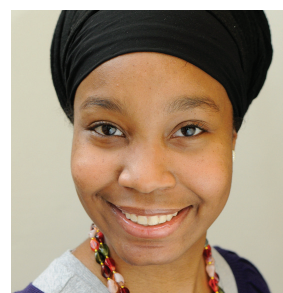
Dr. Townsend remained involved in the campus community throughout his time at OU as a Resident Assistant and also recipient of the Alfred Wilson Award and recognition from the American Chemical Society. Today, as he pursues a career in cancer research, he continues to work toward the goal he had at OU — promoting the understanding and acceptance of one another.

A turning point

For Jameelah Muhammad, CAS '08, receiving the Keeper of the Dream award was “a pivotal moment” in her collegiate career.

“It was a deep inspiration and motivation for me to not only continue to excel academically but also to take leadership roles that I knew would be important and critical to maintaining and addressing diversity on OU’s campus,” she says.

“Even as a teenager, I was a strong advocate for multiculturalism and diversity, but receiving an award in honor of Dr. King was a confirmation of my previous





Coretta Scott King, the late widow of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., joined OU President Gary Russi at the 2005 Keeper of the Dream awards, where she delivered the keynote address. Past KOD award celebration speakers include singer Harry Belafonte, former U.S. ambassador Andrew Young, and actors Danny Glover and Lou Gossett Jr.

works and symbol of how I would be able to significantly impact other people's lives in the future," she explains.

Today she works at the Center for Sustainable Energy at Bronx Community College in New York City, where she provides training, eco-literacy and workforce development skills to young adults to prepare them for "green" careers.



Goal achieved

After witnessing his first KOD celebration, George Davis III, CAS '06, made a vow to one day achieve it, as well. He realized that dream in 2004, when he was one of four students awarded the scholarship.

Now employed as the associate director of

admissions at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Mich., Davis says his focus on winning the award helped him become more active in student and campus life.

"It put me in a place to build relationships and make my ethnic identity a part of my story," he says. "I wanted to promote Dr. King's vision and his engagement of people and assist in developing changes in attitudes and expectations."

Davis says being involved at OU helped him fully understand the importance of higher education.

"It gave me a world view and an ability to look at individuals as the whole person," he says. "Now, I work to help Grand Valley students understand that your desires are attainable, regardless of your background, as long as you are committed."

For more information on KOD, visit oakland.edu/kod. ■

2012

20th Annual KEEPER OF THE DREAM SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CELEBRATION

Keynote Speaker:

Common, rapper, author, activist

Monday, January 16, 2012, 11 a.m.

Oakland Center Banquet Rooms

Free and open to the public

Common is one of music's most poetic and respected lyricists. Over the course of seven albums, his introspective rhymes have pushed boundaries with their incisive social commentary. Common is considered a role model, offering the younger generations a better understanding of self-respect and love. He has combined hip-hop with literature, releasing three children's books: *The Mirror and Me*, *I Like You but I Love Me*, and *M.E. (Mixed Emotions)*. In 2011,

he released the provocative and touching memoir *One Day It'll All Make Sense*, his first book for adults, and in 2007, he launched the Common Ground Foundation, an organization dedicated to the empowerment and development of America's urban youth.

Whether inspiring audiences through his music, his books, or his foundation, Common continues to break new ground, and remains one of hip-hop's most innovative, positive voices. ■



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COME HOME TO OU

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2012

Alumni Welcome Reception

Meadow Brook Hall

5 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Sponsor: OU Alumni Association

OU Hall of Honor Ceremony

Oakland Center, Banquet Rooms

6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Sponsor: Athletics

Admission Fee

Friday Night Live Comedy Show

Nick Pike

Vandenberg Hall Cafeteria

7 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Sponsor: Housing

Guard the Grizz Night

Snow Bowl and Car Smash

Grizz Statue located outside

Recreation and Athletics Center

9 p.m. until midnight

Sponsors: Grizz Gang, Athletics,

Campus Recreation, CSA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2012

Campus Open House

Various campus buildings

9 a.m. until noon

Details online.

Varsity "O" Reunion

Oakland Center Gold Rooms

Noon until 2 p.m.

Sponsor: Athletics

Wilson Award Recipients Reception

Meadowbrook Hall

11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Sponsor: President

OU Housing Reunion

Vandenberg Hall Cafeteria

11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Sponsor: Housing

Family Festival

Campus Recreation Center —

Lower Level

1 p.m. until 3 p.m.

Sponsors: President, OU Alumni Association,

Center for Student Activities, Campus Recreation

Center for Multicultural Initiatives and Black Alumni Social

Oakland Center — Oakland Room

1 p.m. until 3 p.m.

Sponsor: Center for Multicultural Initiatives

OU Faculty and Staff Retiree Reception

Campus Recreation Center —

Pioneer Room

2 p.m. until 3 p.m.

Sponsors: President and Provost

OU Student Body Tailgate Party

O'rena (P-16 Lot)

Noon until 3:30 p.m.

Sponsors: Student Congress, WXOU, Grizz Gang,

SAFB, OU Post, SPB, SVP

OU Swimming and Diving Competition

OU Natatorium

2 p.m.

Women's and Men's Basketball Games

O'rena, Athletic Center

3:30 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Sponsors: Athletics, Student Congress

Casino Night 2012

Oakland Center, Banquet Rooms

8 p.m. until midnight

Sponsors: Housing, Student Program Board

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2012

OU 5K Run

Location: TBD

9 a.m.

Sponsor: Athletics

COME HOME TO OU

event sponsor

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Come Home to OU honorary co-chairs: David Baker Lewis, SBA '65; chairman and founding partner, Lewis & Munday, P.C.; former Oakland University Foundation director and trustee; and Cameron Brunet-Koch, Ph.D., CAS '78; president, North Central Michigan College; former director of CIPO and assistant director in the Department of University Housing at OU.

Look for more details on all Come Home to
OU events at oakland.edu/comehome.



Heavy metal heroes

Strong showings in national competitions help boost OU's profile in robotics By Eric Reikowski



Gleaming under the laboratory lights, Botzilla cuts a commanding presence. Gloss black, chrome-wheeled and completely self-navigational, it is surrounded by its robot predecessors — Beast, Moonwalker and Frankenbot — all of which have been replaced as the center of attention in the Autonomous Robot and Vehicle Simulation Lab.

Perhaps it sounds like something out of George Lucas's *Star Wars* studio, but, in fact, this scene is taking place at Oakland University. The humans presently fussing over Botzilla's internal mosaic of printed circuit boards are OU students, working in a lab set unsuspectingly among the classrooms in the Science and Engineering Building.

As members of the Oakland Robotics Association (ORA), they belong to one of two student organizations dedicated to the study and advancement of robotics. Along with their colleagues in the Collegiate FIRST Robotics Club, they represent the leading edge of OU's foray into a dynamic, ever-evolving field.

And while Botzilla boasts some star power these days — having won a \$3,000 prize and placed in all categories at the recent Intelligent Ground Vehicle Competition — the robot is only one component of an OU program that is

attracting interest from students, other institutions, grant agencies and private enterprises.

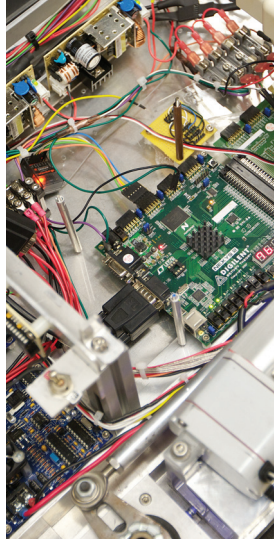
It's a far cry from the days when robots were regarded with suspicion — or even fear.

The age of robots

"Robots, as we have been envisioning since the last century, will be an integral part of human society," says Ka C. Cheok, Ph.D., a professor in OU's Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and faculty adviser to the ORA. "Robots perform much more robustly and reliably where and when humans cannot. We've seen reports of military robots saving the lives of our troops. Social robots will work for us in homes and in offices."

Dr. Cheok points out that robotics programs like OU's are seen as valuable training grounds for future science and engineering professionals who will spur a new generation of promising innovations and technologies.

In fact, OU's work in robotics studies helped the School of Engineering and Computer Science secure a multiyear research contract from the U.S. Army and a \$300,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. The Army award



From the drawing board to reality, robots are rising in OU's robotics laboratory. Dr. Ka C. Cheok (left, in white shirt) assists Dr. Lincoln Lorenz, vice president of the Oakland Robotics Association, as they inspect the printed circuit board of "Botzilla," their latest creation.

was to develop and transition a smart stealthy tracking technique for applications to multiple robots, personnel and assets in the outdoor field and indoor environment. The NSF award helped fund a 10-week summer research program for nationally-recruited undergraduate students and has had a significant robotics focus since it began two years ago.

Learning and doing

Micho Radovnikovich, a doctoral student in systems engineering, says students appreciate the unique experience and competitive edge that OU robotics programs provide. He serves as president of ORA and credits the organization with sparking his interest in the robotics field.

"Participating in ORA has provided a fun and challenging complement to my education," Radovnikovich says. "We bring robots from the drawing board into reality. This involves multidisciplinary cooperation and requires creative and professional ideas, which are qualities that will greatly help students when seeking employment in industry."

With a focus on land robots, the ORA has garnered several accolades, including winning second place at the 2011 Mini-Grand Challenge. Radovnikovich says the group attracts students of diverse backgrounds because the robotics field demands expertise from many areas of engineering.

"Mechanical engineers build a reliable, durable body for the vehicle, electrical engineers design a power system that can safely and conveniently power all the on-board sensors and computers, and computer engineers develop the software and artificial intelligence systems," he explains. "For all involved, it's very satisfying to watch the creation move around on its own, and it makes all the hours spent worth it."

A sister organization to the ORA, Oakland's Collegiate FIRST Robotics Club recently captured top honors

"Our robotics projects provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn in the lab and to face the real challenges they will be expected to handle after they graduate."

— Dr. Osamah Rawashdeh

and second place overall at the 2011 FIRST Robotics Championship, which featured teams from nationally ranked schools.

Dubbed the O-UFOs, the group spent several months developing an aerial vehicle in compliance with FIRST guidelines. Their quad rotor helicopter included cameras for remote piloting and a suction-based grabber that helped the team win the award for most innovative design.

The team's coach, Osamah Rawashdeh, Ph.D., assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering, served on a national committee that devised and implemented the Collegiate Aerial Robotics Demonstration. He says plans are underway for this new college-level competition to become a permanent part of FIRST Robotics, an organization traditionally limited to K-12 students. These developments, he adds, will help students acquire the skills for success beyond college.

"Many students are only exposed to 'dry' lectures and, if they are lucky, to some pre-canned labs," Dr. Rawashdeh explains. "Our robotics projects provide them with the opportunity to apply what they learn in the lab and to face the real challenges they will be expected to handle after they graduate."

For more about OU's robotics initiatives, visit oaklandrobotics.wordpress.com and e2r.secs.oakland.edu. ■

Laidlaw's legacy

One of OU's earliest graduates remains one of its staunchest supporters *By Amy Lynn Smith*



It's a good bet there aren't many Oakland University students who can say they played cards until midnight with Matilda Dodge Wilson at Meadow Brook Hall.

Then again, not every student is Gary

Laidlaw, SBA '64, who was among the first to attend OU when he began taking classes in 1961.

In fact, there's a good chance Laidlaw was the first student to set foot on campus — even before there was a campus. In 1956, Laidlaw's father brought the 13-year-old lad with him to a farm equipment auction at what was then Meadow Brook Farms.

"Little did I know, but the sale was taking place right where North Foundation Hall and South Foundation Hall are today," says Laidlaw. "That was my first glimpse of the Wilsons, who were both out there watching how the sale was going, and my first encounter with Oakland University."

Ground was broken for the university the following year, and it wasn't long before Laidlaw would be on campus, beginning a long and fruitful relationship that continues to this day.

Vivid memories

Laidlaw, who went on to a successful 40-year career with Comerica Bank, hadn't planned to attend college at all because his family couldn't afford it. But the high school class valedictorian was awarded a scholarship, courtesy of then-dean of Continuing Education, Lowell Eklund, who'd heard and was impressed by Laidlaw's commencement speech. That made it possible for Laidlaw to go to the brand-new college.

"I literally watched the college being built," says Laidlaw. "The library was originally housed in North Foundation Hall, and when they opened the Kresge Library, we all helped move the books on rolling carts."

In those days, Matilda Dodge Wilson would host parties for scholarship recipients. Laidlaw vividly recalls her standing in the entryway at Meadow Brook Hall



Laidlaw (left) accepts the 1998 Distinguished Alumni Service Award from OU President Gary Russi.

with her hand on the great table, greeting every student by name. “That was pretty special,” he says.

Laidlaw feels the same way about his education at OU, where he pursued a double major in business and psychology. He says if it weren’t for the liberal arts emphasis at OU, he probably wouldn’t have taken courses in music or Russian or other foreign languages.

“Back then, I never thought I’d be traveling to Russia or Greece — which I did later in life — so those things really paid off,” Laidlaw says. “Oakland broadened my horizons.”

What’s more, he’s certain the liberal arts emphasis at OU was a factor in his career, which began immediately after graduation at what was then Detroit Bank and Trust and later became Comerica Bank. Laidlaw moved up quickly through the organization, eventually becoming a first vice president of retail banking. One of his significant accomplishments before he retired in 2004 was introducing the then-new concept of full-service banking in supermarkets which, back in 1988, proved to be one of Comerica’s successful market strategies.

“Without my liberal arts background at Oakland, I wouldn’t have been open to that kind of out-of-the-box thinking,” says Laidlaw. “And because I managed a large organization of people, having a degree in both business and psychology made me better-prepared to do that.”

Vision for the future

Both as an active supporter and ambassador, Laidlaw has watched OU transform over the years. Indeed, Oakland has become a tradition for his family, with 14 relatives having attended the university to date.

A longtime member of the OU Foundation Board, Laidlaw has served on the Alumni Association Board and has made an annual donation to OU every year since his graduation in 1964. In addition, he and his wife, Ann, made a \$200,000 bequest to the university, split between The Honors College and Meadow Brook Hall. He says it’s been satisfying to see OU grow from a school of less than 1,000 students to one attended by nearly 20,000 today.

“It’s pretty amazing to see the law school and now the medical school moving OU significantly forward,” says



OU founder Matilda Dodge Wilson (in foreground), looking resplendent at her 80th birthday party in 1963, is surrounded by OU students who attended the gala. Laidlaw, in dark-rimmed glasses in photo center, behind the cake made in the image of Meadow Brook Hall.



Laidlaw (left) shares a moment with Lowell Eklund, the former OU dean who was responsible for recommending Laidlaw for a scholarship.

Laidlaw. “When I look at all the property there is to expand on, I hope I’ll still be here in 15 or 20 years to see where the university is then. I believe it will be one of the premier universities in the country.”

He says he’ll always feel a connection to OU, which is firmly rooted in memories of parties at Meadow Brook Hall, Matilda Dodge Wilson’s Belgian horses and the sprawling farm that’s become a respected university.

“It’s hard to explain my feelings about Oakland,” says Laidlaw. “They’ve evolved over 50 years, but the heart of it is Meadow Brook Hall and the Wilson family. Knowing that they created the university is still an unbelievable thing.” ■

Amy Lynn Smith is a Birmingham, Mich.-based freelance writer.

Standing tall

Former OU basketball star Keith Benson takes his game to a higher level *By Fritz Reznor*



Photos courtesy of OU Athletics Communications

A quick review of the individual awards and records that Keith “Kito” Benson amassed in his career as a center for Oakland University’s Golden Grizzlies basketball team stacks up nearly as high as the man himself: All-America teams, All-Defensive honors, two Summit League Player-of-the-Year awards, the 2010 Lou Henson Award (given to the top player among mid-major colleges) ... and the list goes on.

To cap it off, the all-time OU shot-block leader became the first player in the university’s history to be selected in the National Basketball Association draft, which was held in June. He was taken by the Atlanta Hawks in the second round with the 48th overall pick.

Benson, BIS ’11, had his No. 34 jersey retired in a ceremony during halftime of OU’s 89-81 win over the University of Tennessee on Nov. 28 at the O’rena.

That’s a long way from his days as a fledgling player for the Birmingham Country Day High School team. Back in 2005, the then-lanky, 6’ 7” shooting guard — who wasn’t even a starter for his team until his senior year — had only two NCAA Division I scholarship offers: one from Fairfield (Conn.) University and one from Howard University (Washington D.C.).

That is, until OU men’s basketball head coach Greg Kampe got wind of him.

“We were looking for guys 6’ 8” or 6’ 9” with a lean body type,” recalls Kampe. “One of our assistants recommended that I go see Kito play. So I drove up to Saginaw, I’m watching the game, and all of a sudden Kito comes out of nowhere, rises up and blocks a shot. That was when I decided we would recruit him.”

Benson came aboard and was red-shirted his first year at OU. Yet he kept growing, both in terms of his maturity as a player and physically. He eventually topped out as a 6’ 11” center with a 7’ 4” wingspan. Kampe and his staff helped him develop offensive post moves and even changed the team’s defensive philosophy to allow Benson to best utilize his exceptional shot-blocking skills.

“The coaches helped me with my footwork and post moves, to stressing the importance of being on time and being accountable,” Benson says. “On the court, they gave me the freedom to do the things I’m good at and to get me the ball where I could do something with it.

“It gave me confidence to step up my game.”

Turning points

Benson improved, but was still inconsistent. That is, until an eight-day span in December 2008, when he posted 23 points and 11 rebounds against the University of Michigan, and 20 points, five rebounds and two blocks against a Michigan State team that went on to reach the NCAA national championship game.

“From that point on,” Benson recalls, “I knew I had a chance to make it to the next level.”

In the summer of 2009, Benson was one of 14 college centers invited to the Amar’e Stoudemire Skills Academy run by the NBA star in Phoenix. There, Benson refined his game against the top big men in the country and began his ascent as an NBA prospect.

With a new-found confidence and an array of offensive moves he learned at the camp, Benson’s numbers jumped to 17.3 points and 10.5 rebounds per game his junior year, and 17.9 points and 10.1 rebounds as a senior. He led the Golden Grizzlies to back-to-back Summit League titles and NCAA Championship Tournament appearances.



The lasting effects

Though Benson has graduated, he’s left an obvious imprint on OU’s basketball program — three players 6’ 10” or taller are on this year’s team.

“Five years ago, a 6’ 9” kid with shot-blocking skills was not going to come to Oakland,” Kampe admits. “All that changed because of Keith Benson. And, rightly so or not, we — as coaches — are getting the credit. The upshot for our program is that it’s getting us into homes that we were never able to get into before.”

Kampe says even with the loss of Benson, along with Will Hudson and Larry Wright, he would be shocked if his team was not ranked again this year — another residual from the Benson era.

Benson, who earned his Bachelor of Integrative Studies degree in April, says that when his playing days are through he would like to pursue a career in business or architecture.

For now, his blueprint calls for an NBA career. ■

New era begins

School of Medicine welcomes charter class



The Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, Michigan's first new M.D.-granting (allopathic) medical school in 47 years, welcomed its inaugural class of 50 students on August 8.

More than 3,200 students applied for the 50 positions in the school's first class. Of those admitted, 70 percent are Michigan residents; 46 percent are women. Fifteen students from eight other states from the east to the west coast have moved to Michigan to attend the new medical school.

Many were attracted by the school's innovative approach to medical education. Unlike traditional medical schools, the curriculum combines basic science instruction with clinical training (where students interact with patients) across all four years, with a focus on team-based, participatory learning in small groups. The school's curriculum also highlights promotion and maintenance of health, not just diagnosis and treatment of disease.

The students capped off their first week of medical school by taking part in the traditional White Coat Ceremony at Meadow Brook Hall on August 12. For more than 100 years, the white coat has symbolized the trust between patient



TOP: Medical students have access to newly designed facilities in O'Dowd Hall, in addition to all other campus facilities.

LEFT: Incoming students took part in the traditional White Coat Ceremony to mark their entry into the field of medicine.



and physician. In the presence of family, guests and faculty members, at an event supported by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation for Humanism in Medicine, the students were welcomed by leaders of the medical community and ceremonially “cloaked” with their white coats.

Then, along with the physicians in attendance, they recited the Declaration of Geneva, adopted by the General Assembly of the World Medical Association at Geneva in 1948. A revision of the Hippocratic Oath, it is a declaration of a physician’s dedication to the humanitarian goals of medicine.

Students received their coats from one of five Beaumont physician mentors who will support and guide them during their medical school years. Tucked inside the pocket of every white coat was a personal message of inspiration and support from a Beaumont doctor. ■

A snapshot of the charter class

Undergraduate Institutions:

- Barnard College
- Brigham Young University
- Calvin College
- Case Western Reserve
- Cornell University
- Eastern Michigan University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Kalamazoo College
- Michigan State University
- Northwestern University
- Oakland University
- University of California – Irvine
- University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
- University of Notre Dame
- Wayne State University
- Western Michigan University
- Yeshiva University

Average age: 23.4

Age range: 21-37

State of Residence:

Michigan	70%
California	8%
Connecticut	6%
Massachusetts	2%
Minnesota	2%
New Jersey	1%
Rhode Island	1%
Utah	1%
Virginia	1%

Languages spoken (in addition to English):

Arabic
Chinese
French
German
Hebrew
Hindi
Persian
Punjabi
Spanish
Urdu



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Feet forward

Michigan twins setting the pace in NYC fashion world *By Cara Catallo*



The attractive models effortlessly showcase their Shane&Shawn apparel and shoes. Indeed, they couldn't look more natural wearing the fashionable duds.

Except that they're not models. These charismatic twins are in fact the creative forces behind an emerging fashion empire. Brothers Shane and Shawn Ward, SECS '98, are the brains and muscle behind a footwear-turned-lifestyle brand of handbags, accessories, clothing and jewelry, Shane&Shawn, which is attracting notice in the world of high fashion.

"Shane and Shawn are two highly creative, high-energy guys that have put their unique stamp on the footwear business," says Michael Atmore, editorial director of *Footwear News*. "They have worked hard to build their reputation in an industry that is all about relationships."

Raised in what they call a humble upbringing in Detroit, the brothers graduated from Cass Tech High School and then went on to the University of Michigan. Shane Ward moved out west to design shoes for Adidas, the sports apparel firm, while Shawn was employed as a product engineer at Chrysler Corporation, where he took part in its Chrysler Institute of Engineering trainee program in conjunction with OU, earning a master's degree in engineering.

Later, after trading his engineering job to become a day trader in New York, Ward and his brother joined forces, entering the footwear industry by forming Detny (a combination of Detroit, their hometown, and New York, their new town).

"Detroit still has that cool rock and roll edge to it, where people think of Kid Rock and Eminem," explains Ward, but eventually they changed the brand to the straightforward Shane&Shawn.

Star power

Known for fusing style with comfort, their shoes feature quilted cushion insoles dubbed "luxury liners" and shock-absorbing rubber pods on the soles. The shoes received great reviews from the start. So did the Wards, who appeared on *Access Hollywood*, the *Wendy Williams Show*, MTV's *Made*, and *The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch*, among others.

O Magazine highlighted the shoes, and *People Magazine* included the twins as two of 2008's hottest bachelors while *Black Enterprises* included them among their "Most Powerful Players Under 40" in 2007.

"We were with pretty influential people on there," says Ward, naming Jay-Z, Tiger Woods, and Venus and Serena Williams. "That was so cool, something I'll never forget."





The Wards opened a New York City storefront and established a following, including visits by such celebrities as Kevin Spacey and Sherri Shepherd. But the demands of running a retail business day-to-day took the brothers away from their creative endeavors. In early 2010 Shane&Shawn went entirely online at www.shaneandshawn.com, www.endless.com, www.shoes.com and elsewhere.

"We didn't really get into this business to be retailers," says Ward. "Online, we can sell to any customer around the world."

He says the freedom and lifestyle of being successful as a business owner is partly what drew him to entrepreneurialism.

"Shane and I can travel and work anywhere in the world. As long as there is an Internet connection and a phone we can get our work done," he says. "The best thing is controlling my own destiny every day. When I wake up, I can put my energy into my own company and can reap the rewards."

Practical lessons

Ward credits his earlier engineering career and OU for giving him the confidence and the time management skills to be a successful business owner. He says OU helped bridge the gap between theory and real-world experience.

"Most courses weren't just theoretical; they were focused on actual problem-solving," Ward says. "A lot of the professors work in the field themselves, so there was some real-life applications taught."

To Ward, his OU degree was a great personal accomplishment, too: He was the first person in his family to get a master's degree.

"I'll always be proud to say that I was able to get my master's from Oakland University," he says.

For now, the Wards are busy transitioning their business from footwear to more of a lifestyle company. Shane&Shawn also plans to announce two new collaborations with what Ward calls "major players in the industry," he says.

"Those two things are going to be huge for the Spring 2012 season," says Ward. "The really cool thing is that it will take our brand to a whole new level, a whole new demographic." ■

Cara Catallo is a freelance writer from Clarkston, Mich.

Added value

Distinguished professor subtracts the angst and multiplies the enthusiasm for math studies *By Kevin Knapp*

It's a blistering-hot July day at OU, and the campus is largely — and predictably — quiet. Somewhere else, students and faculty members are trying to enjoy what's left of their summer vacations.

Yet in the cool confines of OU's Science and Engineering Building, there's a buzz of activity. There, in a third-floor classroom, a cluster of high school students are chattily comparing notes and working out the final details for their respective research projects. They are studying math — cheerfully, it appears. The Summer Mathematics Institute is now in session.

The six-week summer program — known colloquially as “math camp” — gives bright and gifted junior and senior high school students from the region an opportunity to advance their understanding while earning college credit. For many, it's a chance to enjoy the fellowship of other devotees of mathematics studies.

To Eddie Cheng, Ph.D., chair of the Mathematics Department at OU, it's another opportunity to share his enthusiasm for the subject. Helming the program for his eighth consecutive year, he says summer camp is his favorite time of the year.

“I enjoy being around such motivated students,” he says. “We all share the same love of math studies, which makes it fun.”

Distinguishing features

In a T-shirt, shorts and sandals, Dr. Cheng looks as laid-back as his students, and is relaxed and comfortable in his bantering with them. Behind his easy-going demeanor, however, is an intense passion both for the field of mathematics — in which he is held in considerable esteem — and his profession as a teacher.

Selected as OU's 2011 Distinguished Professor earlier this year, Dr. Cheng has published scores of research papers and articles, and serves on the editorial board of four noted journals dedicated to mathematical science, networks and operational research and management science.

Outgoing and friendly, he is quick to dispel the shopworn stereotype of the detached and taciturn math teacher. He's perplexed, even somewhat defensive, that others consider mathematics a boring subject that must be suffered through.

“Math can be exciting,” he insists. “Almost everything we do involves math, if you think about it. From my perspective as a teacher, it has a lot to do with how you present it.”

Fortunately for Dr. Cheng's students, presentation is his strong suit. His humorous touches to a sometimes heavy subject they find refreshing and keep them motivated to learn. Philip Bonneville, a high school junior from Attica Township, Mich., says his math camp experience strengthened his desire to continue his math studies.



“Until I attended camp, I hadn't been around many others who had the same passion,” he explains. “Dr. Cheng shared that enthusiasm with us all.”

He says in one instance, Dr. Cheng used a “smiley face” icon as a variable in an equation — to the great amusement of the students. “We learned a lot and still had fun,” Bonneville says.

Perhaps it's not surprising that Dr. Cheng would go the extra mile as an instructor, having already come halfway around the world. He emigrated with his family from Hong Kong to Canada when he was 16.

After receiving his bachelor's degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Waterloo, he joined the faculty of OU in 1997 as an assistant professor. In 2010, he was named chairman of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

“One of the reasons my family wanted to come to North America was because there was more opportunity in



terms of education in math and science programs,” Dr. Cheng recalls. “It is important to me to extend that opportunity to others.”

Math mentor

Today, as the department chair, Dr. Cheng takes pride in directing a program he deems strong (“especially for a smaller university”). In addition to continuing his own studies into the mathematics of operational research and network analysis, he is actively involved in mentoring his students and has published papers with undergraduate students, and even with high schools students — a rarity for a scholar of his stature.

Perhaps the reason that Dr. Cheng enjoys the challenges of personal interaction with his students can be traced to the time he was still in high school as an earnest mathematician-in-training.

“My teacher told us this story. He said he asked his dentist, ‘How do you get excited about going to work

every day? All you see is teeth.’ He replied, ‘Ah, but every patient is different.’”

Dr. Cheng explains, “I think that’s true for me: I see that every student is different, so I always have to adjust my approach.” ■

This story is the 11th in the *OU Magazine* series on Distinguished Professors. Past stories highlighted Shelton Appleton, Michael Chopp, Ron Cramer, Jane Eberwein, Robert Eberwein, Mike Sevilla, Paul Tomboulion, Ronald Finucane, Judith K. Brown and Gopalan Srinivasan. For links to their stories, visit *OU Magazine* online at oakland.edu/oumag.

Tell us about a professor who inspired you. Write to us at Oakland University, Anibal House, 2200 North Squirrel Road, Rochester, MI 48309-4401. Or email your thoughts to OUMag@oakland.edu. Please include your full name, city of residence and phone number.

Cavalier attitude

Banking exec capitalizes on his company's connection to NBA team *By Sandra Beckwith*



You just can't beat the view that Bob Walters has of the Cleveland Cavaliers' home basketball games. The sight lines are fantastic from the owner's box at Quicken Loans Arena. And the parking's not bad either, in a prime spot conveniently located beneath the stadium. In fact, this whole set-up is a Cavs fan's dream.

Funny that these privileges belong to a lifelong Michigander and former die-hard Detroit Pistons fan.

Walters, SBA '90, is chief economist and vice president of the capital markets group at Quicken Loans Inc. He's also a minority owner of Cleveland's franchise in the National Basketball Association (NBA) — a title that elicits a modest smile.

"It sounds a lot fancier than it is," he says. "Let's just say that they don't ask for my thoughts on the next trade."

Nonetheless, Walters has a considerable stake in the franchise, having jumped at the chance to buy into it when his boss, Dan Gilbert, offered him the opportunity. Gilbert, who founded Quicken Loans as Rock Financial in 1985, is the majority owner of the team.

"My loyalty is to the Cavaliers now," Walters says, "but I still root for the Pistons, unless they're playing the Cavs."

Expansion team

Walters joined Rock Financial in 1997 after working in banking for several years, before getting his MBA at the University of Michigan. At the time, the company was a regional lender handling \$2 billion in loans annually; Walters' team employed about 25 people. It's a new ball game today, though. The company is the fifth largest retail lender in the country, closing \$29 billion in loans in 2010. Walters' team has expanded to about 140 people.

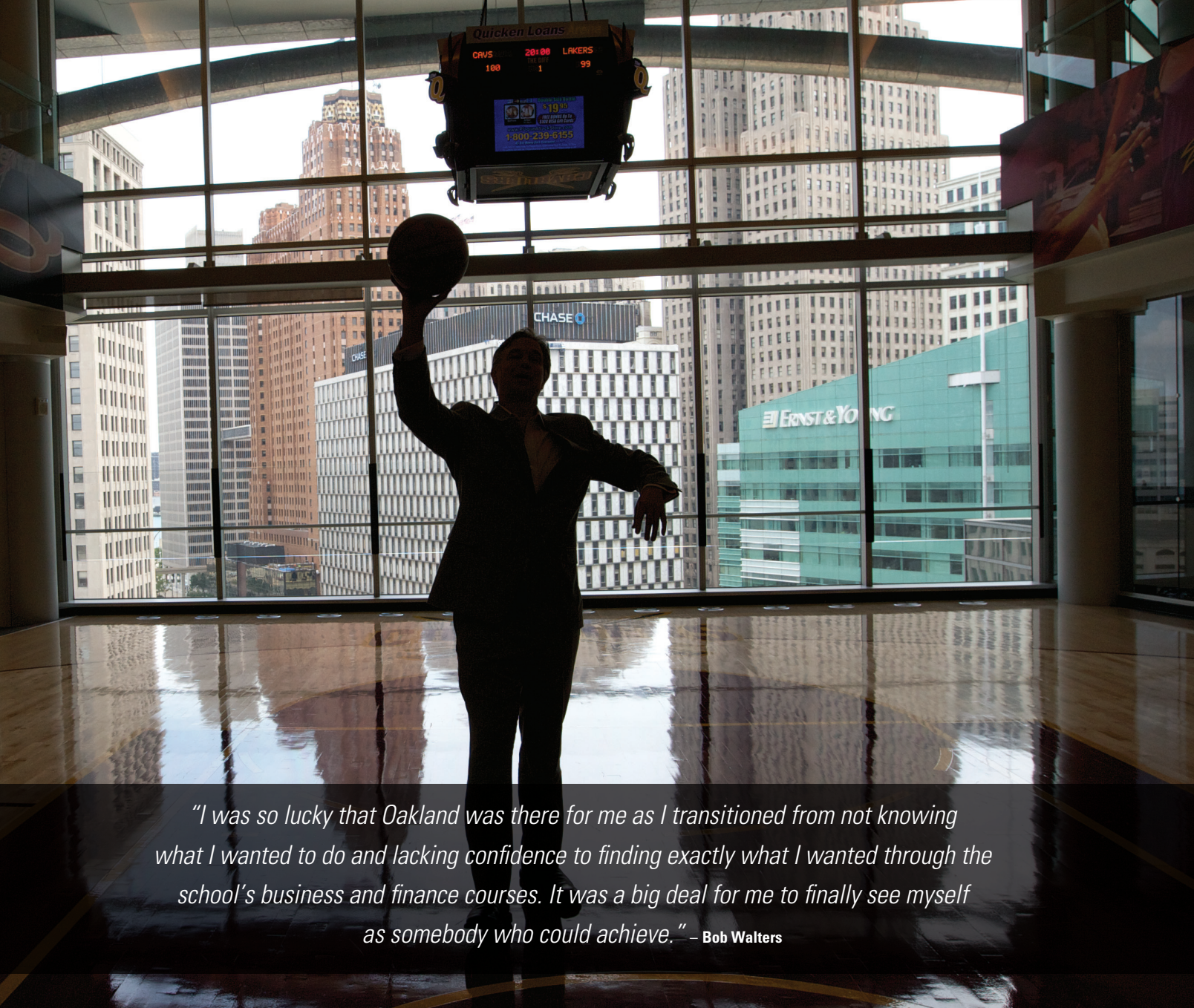
The company's growth required shifting from simply selling loans to managing interest rate risks for a significant loan volume. Walters' capital markets group does this, setting the daily loan rates and creating and managing the company's financial products. "We're in finance," Walters explains, "but we're not accountants. We're more like bond traders."

While national headlines about issues in the mortgage industry and the high rate of home foreclosures in Michigan — it's ranked sixth in the country according to CNBC — suggest that mortgage lenders are struggling, that's not the case with Quicken Loans, according to Walters.

"I've been here for 15 years, and the past few have been the best for growth by far," he says. "We didn't get involved in the products that blew up."

Top ranking

In fact, managing that growth and subsequent success has been one of Walters' greatest challenges and accomplishments. One challenge in particular, he says, has been maintaining the company's relaxed, small-company



"I was so lucky that Oakland was there for me as I transitioned from not knowing what I wanted to do and lacking confidence to finding exactly what I wanted through the school's business and finance courses. It was a big deal for me to finally see myself as somebody who could achieve." – Bob Walters

feel now that there are nearly 4,000 employees in several locations.

"We need a certain amount of structure, of course, but we're very entrepreneurial and want to keep it that way," he explains. "We have a servant-leadership culture. The big shots don't get to park in the best spots — the pregnant women do," he adds. The culture is one reason the company has been ranked in the top 30 of *Fortune Magazine's* "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for the past seven years.

Walters gives Oakland University much of the credit for his career success. He found the academics to be "first rate" and the instructors more caring and involved than he expected.

"I was so lucky that Oakland was there for me as I transitioned from not knowing what I wanted to do and lacking confidence to finding exactly what I wanted

through the school's business and finance courses. It was a big deal for me to finally see myself as somebody who could achieve," he says.

And achieve he has. A new resident of downtown Detroit, the longtime suburbanite now walks two blocks to the company's headquarters. The offices include a basketball court with a replica NBA scoreboard that drops down from the ceiling. A two-story wall of windows overlooks the city skyline.

"I am so proud to work here," he says from his ninth-floor office overlooking Comerica Park, where the Detroit Tigers play. "This company has been very good to me and helped me grow."

It's also gotten him the best seat in the house at the Cavaliers games. ■

Sandra Beckwith is a Fairport, N.Y.-based freelance writer.

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Contact us at (248) 364-6220 to inquire about the exclusive OU alumni museum rental rate.



Give the gift of *Grizz gear*

Check out the range of Golden Grizzlies merchandise and apparel, including hats, sweatshirts, T-shirts, jackets and more, available at the OU Bookstore in the lower level of the Oakland Center and online at oakland.bkstore.com.

You can also find Oakland merchandise at the following local stores:

- Meijer in Rochester Hills
- Sports Authentics in Rochester Hills
(OU students receive 10% off all merchandise with student ID card)
- Finish Line, Lids and Campus Den at Great Lakes Crossing Outlets in Auburn Hills
- Dunham's in Rochester Hills, West Bloomfield, Royal Oak and Troy
- Finish Line at Twelve Oaks Mall and Lakeside Mall
- Textbook Outlet in Auburn Hills

Also check out ougrizzlies.com for more than 400 items available online.

**Be sure to stock up on OU merchandise for the holiday season.
It's a great way to show your Golden Grizzlies spirit!**



OUAA Board of Directors

Board Chair:
Lynn Gross, SBA '87

Bryan Barnett, SBA '98

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Adam Kochenderfer, CAS '02

Michael Michalak, CAS '68

Teresa Stayer, SHS '84

Johnna Struck, SBA '85

Cynthia Thieme, SBA '94

Anthony Thornton, CAS '76

We would like to extend our appreciation to our board members for their hard work, dedication and generous giving of their time and talent to our alumni programs.



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Welcome

Oakland University Alumni and Friends,

I want to extend my thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome I have received from the OU family since joining the university on July 1 as the vice president for community engagement. It is a pleasure to be here and I look forward to meeting even more alumni as events and networking opportunities might allow our paths to cross.

Oakland's reputation in the region is exemplary as the university is becoming more and more recognized on the national playing field with the celebrated and historic opening of the OU William Beaumont School of Medicine; an outstanding record of scientific inquiry and creative endeavors; alumni who continue to impress in their careers and accomplishments, and our scholar-athletes who bring visibility to the university and allow us to take center stage.



Eric Barritt

You may have tuned in to CNBC on Nov. 9 to watch the national Republican presidential primary debate, held live in our athletics arena. It was a thrill to be part of the democratic process that will determine our country's next president, and to share this process with our students, alumni, faculty, staff and community.

The national exposure the debate brought to Oakland University is priceless and engenders a feeling of excitement and pride throughout campus. With thousands of visitors through our doors, from dignitaries and the media to the candidates themselves, we have impressed.

I encourage you to visit the OU campus when you are in the area to see firsthand the growth of our physical landscape. For example, you won't miss the new Human Health Building well into construction at the corner of Squirrel and Walton Roads and set to open next fall.

As alums and benefactors, you can be proud of the many accomplishments of your alma mater. Thank you for your support of Oakland University. Please don't hesitate to contact me or the OU Alumni Association if we can be of assistance. Go Grizzlies!

Eric Barritt
Vice President for Community Engagement
Division of University Relations



Welcome to the Oakland University Alumni Association.

As an Oakland University graduate you are an official member of the alumni association. Your membership in the OUAA provides you with opportunities to reconnect with fellow alumni, participate in programs and events, enjoy benefits and services and share your knowledge and experience with the next generation of alumni.

Now you can show your pride when you use the new I AM OU membership card attached on page 42. Use your card to enjoy privileges to Meadow Brook Hall, Meadow Brook Theatre and Kresge Library. You also qualify for savings with many local and national companies, financial services, savings on museum memberships and much more.

Your participation in the alumni association makes a difference by contributing to the visibility and value of an OU degree and your support is important. Here are five ways you can continue to make a difference;

Impact — Impact a student's experience by contributing to the OU fund or to an OUAA scholarship.

Advocate — Become informed on issues important to OU by joining the Grassroots Grizzlies Advocacy Network

Mentor — Share your professional experience with an OU student.

Open — Open the door for others — volunteer your time as an Alumni Admissions Ambassador.

Update — Update your record to reconnect with OU!

We value your involvement in the life of Oakland University. For more information, visit the OUAA website at oualumni.com. ●

Speed networking program in need of alumni volunteers

Back by popular demand, the OUAA and OU Career Services are hosting a speed networking event on Friday, February 10, 2012. Modeled after the speed-dating concept, speed networking matches alumni and professionals with current students for multiple five-minute sessions where the students can practice their interviewing and networking skills and receive immediate feedback from their alumni mentors. For more information, or if you are interested in volunteering as an alumni mentor for this event, contact Erin Sudrovec, associate director of alumni engagement, at 248-364-6136 or sudrovec@oakland.edu. ●

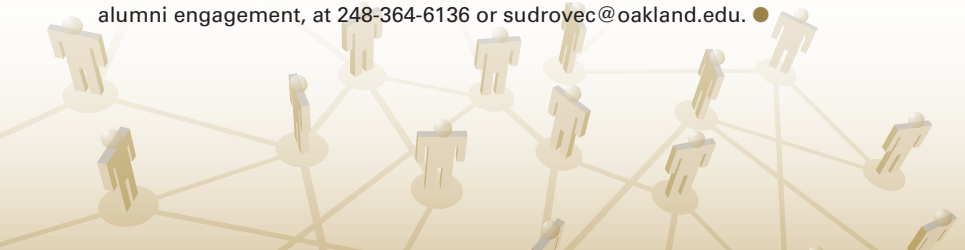
Lit to Film Book Club announces 2011-2012 season lineup

Much of today's cinema is inspired by classic, modern and contemporary literature, but how often do filmmakers stay faithful to the book that's the inspiration for their film?

Join the Oakland University Alumni Association and the Kresge Library for a stimulating and unique approach to the classic book club, as the Lit to Film Book Club explores the transition and interpretation of literature on the silver screen. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. in Kresge Library room 225B.

- January 3 — *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen
- February 7 — *Jar City* by Arnaldur Indriason
- March 6 — *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold
- April 3 — *Cider House Rules* by John Irving
- May 1 — *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne
- June 5 — *The Botany of Desire* by Michael Pollan

The group is led by Anne Switzer, assistant professor of information services and outreach librarian at Kresge Library. If you would like more information about the book club or would like to become part of the group, please contact Alysa Hunton at (248) 364-6106 or email hunton@oakland.edu. ●



We want to hear from you, *Alumni!*

Send us the latest information about you or your accomplishments for future publication in Class Notes. You may include a photo, either a print or high resolution (300 dpi) digital file, if you have one. Class Notes are printed on a space-available basis. Return this form to the address below.

My news

☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss

Name

Maiden name

Spouse name

Class year

Major

Degree

☐ Check here if this is a new address

Home address

City

State

ZIP +4

Country

Home # ()

Work # ()

Email

Company

Address

Title

Mail to: Oakland University, Gift Accounting, John Dodge House
2200 North Squirrel Road, Rochester, MI 48309-4401



What we've been up to

In the "D" with DTE

More than 40 alumni and friends of the School of Engineering and Computer Science (SECS) gathered at an evening reception May 19 at DTE Energy Headquarters in Detroit. Louay Chamra, dean, School of Engineering and Computer Science, and Ron May, senior vice president, Major Enterprise Projects at DTE, served as co-hosts of the event.

The reception represented a joint effort to bring together SECS alumni in the Metro Detroit area as well as alumni who work at DTE. Dean Chamra presented an update on SECS and Oakland University, and Ron May spoke about DTE's clean energy initiatives. ●

Alumni in California reconnect at OUAA reception

A desire to reconnect with their alma mater drew nearly 30 OU graduates to a reception at Santa Monica's Shangri La Hotel in June. The West Coast alumni were able to reconnect and network with other Oakland graduates living in the area. They were joined by several current students who were in California to compete in a national competition as members of Oakland's Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) team.

Alumni at the event graduated in years ranging from 1973 - 2010, in a wide variety of academic disciplines. **Mark Bertler, CAS '73**, showed off his OU letterman baseball jacket, which still fits. Bertler is one of the original members of Oakland's first NCAA Division II baseball team. He earned his degree in sociology and is currently a CEO of Public Health Foundation Enterprises.



Also attending was a recent graduate, **Nina Lavelanet, CAS '10**, who majored in English and cinema studies and moved to California to pursue a graduate degree in film at UCLA; and **Roger Fachini, CAS '89**, whose Oakland biology degree propelled him to California for graduate work. He is now a scientist in Los Angeles. ●

2011 Golf Challenge a huge success

On July 18, 2011, 134 golfers helped support the OUAA Scholarship Program while enjoying the R&S Sharf Golf Course during the annual Golf Challenge event. Individual and sponsor participation increased this year to the tune of \$25,000 in funds to support the OUAA Scholarship Program. Thank you to alumnus **Tom Mittelbrun, SBA '88**, for volunteering his time and expertise. ●



7th annual OU Night at Comerica Park a roaring success

The Grizzly spirit roared into Detroit in August, as nearly 240 Oakland University alumni and friends cheered on the division-leading Tigers at the 7th Annual OU Night at Comerica Park. The group drew the attention of the crowd, as they were projected on the jumbo video screen during the sixth inning.

Sponsored by the Oakland University Alumni Association, participants were able to travel to the game in a chartered bus that will become an annual staple, and were offered plenty of opportunities to reconnect and network with other area alumni.

Participants were treated to an endless picnic dinner at Party Deck 1 in the ballpark and received new Grizzly T-shirts, courtesy of Brian McCarthy, owner of Primo Crafts printing. The Oakland group had lower bowl seats along the right field line, offering fans a chance to catch foul balls as the evening settled into a picture-perfect Michigan summer night.

Alumni who missed out this year will have a chance to attend next August. ●

2011 Alumni Award recipients

The annual Alumni Awards Banquet recognized distinguished OU graduates and individuals who have achieved remarkable success in business, community service, volunteerism and other endeavors.

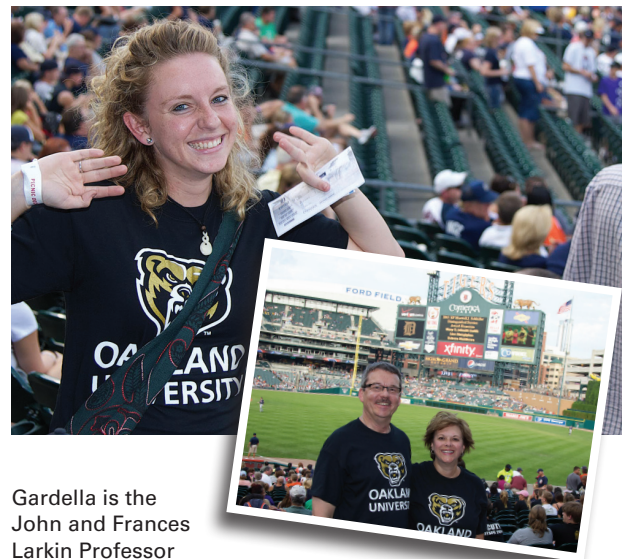
The 2011 recipients included Distinguished Alumni Service Award recipient **Michael K. Stamper, SHS '83**, and Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award recipient **Joseph A. Gardella, Jr., CAS '77**.



Michael K. Stamper

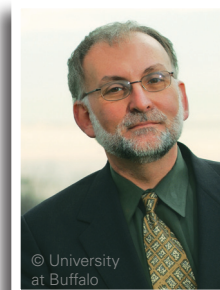
is committed to mentoring and supporting young people who have an interest in becoming safety and health professionals.

Stamper, a senior manager for Safety & Ergonomics at Chrysler Group LLC, also is the chairperson for the Industry Advisory Board-Occupational Health & Safety Program at OU. He



Gardella is the John and Frances Larkin Professor of Chemistry at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. He has twice been awarded the National Science Foundation Award for Special

Creativity and was awarded a National Science Foundation Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. He also serves as the director of the University at Buffalo / Buffalo



Joseph A. Gardella, Jr.

Public Schools Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Partnership, a program that recently was awarded a 5-year, \$10 million Math Science Partnership grant, with Gardella as principal investigator.

The Alumni Awards Banquet also honored Odyssey Award recipients **Michelle Franzen Martin, CAS '99**, and **Brent Vasicek, SEHS '04**; Spirit Award recipient **Jason Ryska, SECS '95** and **'97**; Alumni Community Service Award recipient **Stefen Welch, CAS '05**; and Outstanding Young Alumni Award recipient **Adam Kochenderfer, CAS '02**.

The 2011 Honorary Alumni Award was presented to Timothy F. Healy, president and COO, TK Holdings, Inc., TAKATA, and Moon Jae Pak, doctor of internal medicine, Oakwood Medical Center.

For more information about the 2011 Alumni Awards Banquet or recipients, visit grizzlink.oualumni.com/banquet. ●

ALUMNI ADMISSIONS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



With help from the Grizz himself, AAAP volunteers read the "Hello, Grizz!" children's book to local elementary school students.



SHOW YOUR SPIRIT

As an alumnus of Oakland University, you remember what it was like to cheer for the Black and Gold at sporting events, to participate in student organizations and programs, and to show your school spirit in everything you did. Remain connected to your alma mater and share your experiences with future generations of Golden Grizzlies by joining our growing team of Alumni Admissions Ambassadors.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Join an admissions adviser at a local college fair
- Welcome receptions for admitted students
- Go for the Gold campus visit day
- Housing Move-In Day
- School of Engineering and Computer Science Day
- Conference speaker
- Represent OU at an out-of-state college fair

LEARN MORE

(248) 370-GRIZ | aaap@oakland.edu | oakland.edu/aaap



Grizzly Getaway Alumni Travel

Mayan Mystique — Oceania Cruises Miami to Miami

January 13 – 23, 2012

From \$1,499 per person, double occupancy (including airfare)

Discover Eastern Central America from the comfort of the elegant *Marina*, Oceania Cruises' newest ship. Cruise the Caribbean to lush islands and ancient lands brimming with culture and natural splendor, where rainforests and colonial towns abound. ●

Florence, Italy Air/Land

March 23 – 29, 2012

From \$2,299 per person (including airfare)

Florence's strong architectural character with its elegant appearance and skyline, and its russet rooftops and lofty domes, gave this city its role as an important center for culture and the arts. Join us on

this tour to enchanting Florence, Italy, and discover all the charms this classic city has to offer! ●

Historic Reflections — Oceania Cruises Athens to Barcelona

May 13 – 24, 2012

From \$3,549 per person double occupancy (including airfare)

History springs to life as you sail the balmy seas of the Mediterranean on the elegant Oceania Cruises' *Nautica*. Ports of call on the shores of Greece, Turkey, Italy and France will provide a kaleidoscope of unforgettable experiences. ●

For more information on these trips and more, visit oualumni.com/travel.

** All prices subject to change.*

Save the dates

Golden Grizzlies basketball road trip to Fort Wayne

Are you a die-hard OU basketball fan? Then this road trip is for you! On Saturday, January 14, 2012, Golden Grizzlies fans will board charter buses from campus and venture to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to cheer on the men's and women's basketball teams as they face conference rival Indiana-Purdue-Ft. Wayne. The caravan will depart from Vandenberg Hall at 10 a.m. and will return to campus at approximately 2 a.m. on Sunday, January 15. Space is limited and is available to alumni and friends 18 years of age and older. Contact Erin Sudrovec, associate director of alumni engagement, for details at sudrovec@oakland.edu. Go Grizzlies! ●

OU Winter College in Bonita Springs, Florida

Join OU Grizzlies in the Sunshine State **February 9 – 12, 2012**, for a weekend of thought-provoking classes on a variety of topics taught by OU faculty. Take part in engaging discussions, fun-filled experiences and relaxation! Visit oakland.edu/wintercollege for a slideshow of last year's Winter College weekend and information on this year's event. ●

Mark your calendars to attend these SPECIAL ALUMNI EVENTS during HOMECOMING WEEKEND!

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

Alumni Welcome Reception

*Presented by the
OU Branch-MSU Federal Credit Union
5 – 8 p.m.
Meadow Brook Hall*

Oakland University™

HOMECOMING



SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

OU Housing Reunion

*11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Vandenberg Hall Cafeteria*

Alumni Tailgate

Parking lot 16, across from the O'rena

OUAA Family Festival

*1 – 3 p.m.
Lower level, Rec Center*



Career/Accomplishments

1970s

David Couture, CAS '74, has been married to Donna Johnson for 38 years and has two children and five grandchildren. Couture is currently performing IT project management consulting.

Patrick R. Demers, SEHS '75, is currently working as a human services professional and has a strong interest in outdoor recreation, nature, folk dancing and music.

Michael Esralian, CAS '73, is a business manager for Master Glassworks and Valqua America. Esralian and his wife of 27 years, Shirley, have lived in the Portland, Ore., area since 1985. Before that, Esralian was in Dallas, Texas, for 10 years working in the semiconductor industry. He sends his greetings to all OU alumni.

Patricia Hartig, CAS '77, was appointed director of Advocacy and Public Policy – Lutheran Social Services of Michigan. Hartig has extensive legislative and community experience, including a term as mayor of Trenton, Mich., and service as an assistant attorney general for the State of Michigan. She is a licensed attorney, most recently in private practice. She has also served as the Southeast Michigan manager of Lutheran Engagement for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, managing \$7 million in grants to Michigan churches and nonprofit organizations. She was district director for U.S. Representative John Conyers, working with constituents and acting as a liaison with state, federal and international organizations.

Judy Jones, SEHS '79, is the president and co-founder of the Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation. Jones was diagnosed with cutaneous T-cell lymphoma (CTCL) in 1990, and at that time she realized that there was very little information, resources or support available for people who had this rare disease. In 1998, this Foundation became a reality and, since then, it has grown significantly and is the only organization worldwide that provides comprehensive programs and services to people affected by cutaneous lymphoma.

Steven Kaplan, CAS '75, has joined the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office as an assistant prosecuting attorney. He also works as an adjunct law professor

at Michigan State University College of Law.

Kim (Zim) M. Olson, SECS '79, presented at the University of Colorado Boulder for ZIM mathematics.

Ronald R. Reed, SBA '75, was recently appointed president and chief executive officer at Century Bank and Trust in Coldwater, Mich. He also serves as a director of the bank and as president and treasurer of Century Financial Corp., the bank's holding company. Century Bank and Trust provides corporate, trust and retail banking products and services in Branch, St. Joseph and Hillsdale counties.

1980s

Joseph Angileri, SBA '80, joined Detroit-based Compuware as president and COO. Angileri had been with Deloitte LLP for 19 years and was named managing partner of the Michigan region in 2007. Among Angileri's roles at Deloitte were: National managing partner and chief executive officer for Corporate Finance, member of the U.S. Firms Operating Committee and national managing partner for Strategic Relationship Management. He also served on Deloitte's U.S. board of directors. Most recently, he was responsible for all aspects of the organization's substantial operations throughout Michigan. In his new role at Compuware, he will assume responsibility for the finance, administration, legal and human resources functions. Over time, Angileri will expand his responsibilities over selected business units. Like many Compuware employees, he is highly involved in the community. Angileri serves on the boards of directors for six not-for-profit organizations, including Junior Achievement, the Michigan Opera Theatre and the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce. He also holds positions with the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants and the United Way Campaign Committee. Angileri has achieved a JD from Wayne State University. He maintains his CPA.

Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, CAS '89, was recognized with a Distinguished Teaching Award – The Herman Frederic Lieber Memorial Award at Indiana University East. Clapp-Itnyre is a favorite teacher whose composition and literature classes include Victorian, medieval, children's, and young-adult literature. As a highly respected colleague she has

successfully and prolifically written grant proposals, presented and published papers, won awards and always given generously of her time to students. She is the director of the IU East Honors Program, which she developed along with colleagues, and the sponsor of the campus's Humanities Club. She supervises numerous independent studies, in which her students have tackled interdisciplinary projects such as writing and illustrating a children's picture book on Vincent Van Gogh and studying Broadway musical incarnations of literature. Clapp-Itnyre's work embodies her personal motto in the learning experiences she creates for her students, experiences woven of stories, art, music, theatre, history, scholarship and service to community.

Roger Fachini, CAS '89, lives in Thousand Oaks, Calif., with his wife, Wendy, and son, Roger III. Fachini is a scientist at Amgen. In his spare time he is active in martial arts, with a 3rd Degree in Kendo and a 5th Degree in Tang Soo Do.

Carol A. Friend, B.G.S. '89, partner and chair of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP's Business Immigration Practice Group has been appointed to the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts Board of Trustees. Friend concentrates her practice in the area of employment-based immigration and represents national and international companies in obtaining authorization for employees to work temporarily and permanently in the United States and abroad. She has been recognized in *Best Lawyers in America* from 2009 to 2011; in the *DBusiness* list of "Top Lawyers" in 2010 and 2011; and in *Michigan Super Lawyers* in 2010. Aside from her new position with Music Hall, Friend has served on the board of directors of InForum since 2008.



Marian Meisner McClellan, MAT '88, is a candidate for mayor of Oak Park, Mich. She is past chair of the Oak Park-Huntington Woods Democratic Club. Her son, Andy Meisner, is currently the Oakland County, Mich., treasurer.



"I always knew I was good at taking big ideas and breaking them down for other people, and I really honed that talent in the communication program at Oakland."

— Brandon Chesnutt

Photo by Taylor Hulyk

Social media pro has knack for building online relationships

For someone who admits he was once one of those people who was "looking for the right path to find him," **Brandon Chesnutt, CAS '08**, has sure turned out to be a go-getter.

Today, he's acknowledged as a mover-and-shaker in the expanding world of social media. *Crain's Detroit Business* last year named him in its "20 in Their 20s" list of influential young leaders in the metro region.

"I always knew I was good at taking big ideas and breaking them down for other people, and I really honed that talent in the communication program at Oakland," he says.

After graduation, Chesnutt was hired by Identity Marketing & Public Relations, an integrated PR and strategic communications firm in Bingham Farms, Mich. After working first with traditional media, Chesnutt recognized a shift in how companies were communicating online.

Chesnutt began guiding his company's clients into the online world. Today, as social media director, he oversees a team focused on helping companies capitalize on a Web presence.

"Technology is making it easier for companies to build better relationships," he says. "You can literally make an introduction whether you're three miles away or 3,000 miles away."

Chesnutt is parlaying his net savvy in a variety of other endeavors. He co-founded a local chapter of the Startup Foundation, a joint effort between Startup Weekend, a nonprofit based in Seattle, and the Kauffman Foundation, one of the world's largest foundations devoted to entrepreneurship.

Chesnutt organizes Startup Weekend events he describes as a "54-hour entrepreneurial boot camp," where groups of people gather to pitch new business ideas. They spend the weekend developing concrete plans for those concepts and select the best. The foundation then takes the concepts to the next level, providing more structure and support for entrepreneurial programs.

"The social media world is all about making new connections and reinforcing old ones," he says. "That's something I love to do." ■

By Amy Lynn Smith, a freelance writer from Birmingham, Mich.



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Business grad discovers oil in California

When visiting a number of California wineries several years ago, Crystal and Chip Reibel fully expected the region's renowned wines would leave a lasting impression on them. But it was something else that tasted so good it would change the path of their lives.

"California extra virgin olive oil," recalls **Crystal Reibel, SBA '99**. "It was the most *amazing* flavor we'd ever tasted."

And so began the idea for what today is a thriving business. Originally from Michigan, the Reibels moved to California almost eight years ago, where they both became graduate students at Pepperdine University. After enrolling in an entrepreneurship class, they created a business plan for a make-believe olive oil company.

"We did a ton of research, and had one of the most thorough business plans our teacher had seen," says Reibel.

After graduating in April 2009, the Reibels decided to convert their well-developed plan into more than just a class project. That fall, they opened the Beyond the Olive shop in Pasadena, in a downtown location ideal for attracting both local "foodies" and tourists.

From the mild and mellow to bold and robust, Beyond the Olive carries about 50 different kinds of California olive oils, including flavored oils. They also carry almost 50 vinegars — both wine and balsamic — plus olives, dips and tapenades.

"Our main focus is on California extra virgin olive oil. We don't import any olive oil at all," Reibel says. "We encourage sampling and tasting of the oils and vinegars, because they're all so very different."

The Reibels have extended their reach electronically by marketing their products through their online store at www.beyondtheolive.com.

Reibel says the skills she learned as an OU student continue to serve her well in her current business endeavor.

"Oakland had a great business school, and the teachers I had were really amazing," Reibel says. "They helped give me a solid foundation for making this dream come true." ■

By Cara Catallo, a freelance writer from Clarkston, Mich.

Colleen Ochoa-Peters, CAS '87, joined Forgotten Harvest as senior director of Strategic and Planned Gifts. As of June 1, 2011, she will have responsibility for the organization's Major and Planned Gift Development. Since 2005, Ochoa-Peters has served as both a director and Philanthropic Services officer for the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. Her primary focus has been donor advised fund programs and engagement with donors and professional advisers to establish endowed and planned gifts to benefit charities in Southeast Michigan. In this role, she has drawn upon her 20 years of experience in government, business and nonprofit organizational arenas. Ochoa-Peters is an active member of the Southeast Michigan community. She serves on the Advisory Board of the Waterford Foundation for Public Education and is a member of the Planned Giving Roundtable for Southeast Michigan, Leadership Oakland Alumni Association and Inforum. She is a former board president of both Lighthouse of Oakland County and the Oakland University Alumni Association. She has previously served as a member of Forgotten Harvest's advisory board. Ochoa-Peters and her husband, U.S. Representative Gary Peters, are proud parents of Madeleine, Alana and Gary Jr. Besides volunteering locally, she supports First Lady Michelle Obama's service initiatives, and has volunteered with the First Lady at schools, food banks and military bases in the Washington, D.C., area. Prior to joining the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Ochoa-Peters served as a financial adviser at UBS Financial Services. She holds a Master of Arts in Philanthropic Studies from Indiana University.

Paul Stodulski, SBA '89, was named CFO of the Year in the real estate category by *Crain's Detroit Business* at a celebration reception in May 2011. Stodulski, CFO of Redico LLC and American House Senior Living LLC, Southfield, was recognized for his work in implementing a series of technology platforms so the company could be more efficient in managing property and be poised to take on new work going into the future.

Dr. Robert W. Wassmer, SBA '83, professor and chairperson, Public Policy and Administration at California State University — Sacramento, has received the Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award 2010–11. The award is given each year to a faculty member who has, over many years,

made significant contributions to a discipline through scholarly activity, creative/artistic endeavors, research and publication. Dr. Wassmer's impact is obvious in the number of citations received for his previous academic work, by the number of references to his work in the two top undergraduate textbooks and the inclusion of his work in university syllabi. As a result of his national and international reputation he has been invited to serve on the editorial boards of *California Politics and Policy*, *State and Local Government Review*, *Economic Development Quarterly*, and *Public Finance and Management* (which comes from Erasmus University in the Netherlands). He has also been invited numerous times to review research and book proposals by prestigious organizations and major presses. Wassmer has also been particularly active in the community, sharing his expertise on numerous public radio and television programs, and providing public testimony. He was appointed by CA Forward as an adviser to a group of stakeholders designing governance reforms for the state of California. In 2010, the prestigious Brookings Institution sought out Professor Wassmer to summarize the impact of local income taxation on major U.S. cities' increasing use of property tax abatement in the United States. This contribution appeared in the book *Urban and Regional Policy and Its Effects*, Volume 3, Brookings Institution Press, 2010 (see profile p. 50).

1990s

Amy Ackley, SEHS '96, shares news of her novel, *Sign Language*, being published by Penguin Young Readers. This impressive first novel has already received acclaimed praise and is the winner of the first Amazon Breakthrough YA Novel Award Contest. Drawing on the experience of losing her father to kidney cancer when she was a teenager, Ackley offers an honest portrayal of coping with terminal illness and moving forward. She lives in southeast Michigan with her husband and three daughters.



Peter Auger, CAS '92, was named a finalist for the CFO of the Year Award in the government category by *Crain's Detroit Business*. As the city manager of

Auburn Hills, Mich., since January 2008, Auger has made it a point to keep in contact with the people doing the work for the city as a way to get input and learn how to create efficiencies. He has implemented new technology to improve efficiency and improved the city's bond rating to lower the city's borrowing costs.

Desiree L. Dismuke, SEHS '94, is married and the parent of one daughter, who is considering Oakland University as one of her college choices.

Joanne C. Gerstner, CAS '93, is the owner of Gerstner Media, a contract content and editorial service provider for clients such as the *New York Times*, ESPN and the U.S. Olympic Committee. She has written four children's books, two currently on the market, and two publishing in the fall.

Amy Heard, CAS '93, is cast as Mary Magdalene in the Living Stations of the Cross. She has recently performed with the Motor City Lyric Opera in *Schubert to Showboat*; she played Cheryl in a Low Rode Productions film entitled *Presence*; and she acted as director, choreographer and music director for an original touring youth musical entitled *He Will Be There ... Because He's God!* As winner of two Detroit Music Awards in 2004 (Outstanding Christian vocalist and songwriter), Amy is currently finishing her third CD, *Meant to Be*.



Jennifer Hitchcock, SECS '94, was promoted to Senior Executive Service (SES) at the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) in March 2011. Hitchcock brings more than 20 years' experience in mobility and power and energy technologies, system engineering, acquisition and program management to the SES role. In her current position, she is responsible for ensuring concepts, analytics, analysis and system simulation are completed for all ground vehicle technology integration to drive system integration solutions to meet emerging Army battlefield challenges. She leads more than 500 associates in five technical business areas and is the executive responsible for the planning, execution, funding and selection of technology programs the Army will pursue to align and transition to acquisition programs. Hitchcock

continued

is currently pursuing a doctorate in organization development at Lawrence Technological University.

Kristen Malecki, CAS '98, moved to New York after graduating from OU and spent three years working in creative services at a large PR company. In 2002 she moved back to Detroit and spent three years working at the College for Creative Studies. She currently works in the Department of Music at Wayne State as the manager of Marketing and Academic Services. In 2007 she completed an MA in cultural anthropology at Wayne State.

Thomas (Tom) Miller, MBA '94, CAS '83, has had two articles published in *Defense Acquisition and Technology* magazine and another article accepted for publication in *Contract Management* magazine.

Karl Randall, SBA '93, has had his first book published. *Korean Games and Sports: Modern and Traditional* has been published by Hollym Publishing and is now available in the U.S.

Krista Sohm (Wahlman), SBA '90, was appointed to the position of Vice President, Communications for Meritor, Inc. In her new role, Sohm will be responsible globally for brand management, corporate communications, executive communications, employee communications, marketing communications, media relations, governmental affairs and community relations. She has been with Meritor since 2000 when she joined the company as manager of Internal Communications. Since that time, she has held positions of increasing responsibility, most recently serving as senior director of Corporate Communications. Prior to joining Meritor, Sohm spent more than nine years in strategic communication and marketing roles at EDS GM Global Communications, EDS Corporate Marketing for the Detroit Region and EDS Human Performance Services. Sohm holds an MBA from Wayne State University.

2000s

Nahawand (Dina) H. Abu-Isa, MA '00, has lived in Rochester for 33 years and is happily married to her husband, who is an adjunct mechanical engineering professor at Oakland University. They have four adult children and four young grandchildren. She has been practicing

counseling for the past 11 years. Abu-Isa recently launched her own private practice and her office is located in downtown Rochester. She works with individuals, families and couples, but particularly enjoys working with women and young adults. She is also skilled in counseling multicultural clients.

Zacharie J. Azzam, SBA '01, was a contestant on an episode of *Jeopardy* that aired on March 17, 2011.

Lillian Birrell (Demski-Tylenda), SON '00, has been appointed clinical director of the Visiting Nurse Association of SE Michigan's hospice program. Birrell has more than 23 years of experience including physical rehabilitation, medical surgical, critical care and outpatient cardiology. Most recently she served the past 10 years as quality improvement coordinator for the Hospices of Henry Ford in Madison Heights, Mich. She is a certified hospice and palliative nurse and a certified end-of-life nursing-education consortium trainer. In addition, she holds membership with the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Michigan Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

Gloria Brooks (Danna), CAS '01, was named a 2011 Champion of the New Economy, an honor awarded by Junior Achievement in partnership with *DBusiness* magazine and News/Talk WJR 760AM. This annual award recognizes leaders who help successfully diversify Michigan's economy by starting a new business or leading a dramatic transformation at an existing company. Brooks was selected as a champion in recognition of her success in revitalizing Arbor Hospice by cutting costs, retraining staff, and selling off a line of business, all while enhancing patient care. She was profiled in *Crain's Detroit Business* in March 2011. She was elected vice chair of the board of directors for the Michigan Hospice & Palliative Care Organization in April 2011. Brooks is the president and CEO of Arbor Hospice.

William L. Coale, PhD, SEHS '05, CAS '89, retired in 2009 from his job as a school superintendent and moved to California, where he writes education reform editorials. He teaches online for Spring Arbor University's School of Education and works as a Licensed Renewal Coach, helping leaders and organizations through sustainable change initiatives. In his spare time he works as a pipe organ restorer and plays theatre pipe organ concerts.

Kristin Kitson, CAS '07, has joined Tandem Design as an account coordinator. At Tandem, she will utilize her project management, marketing and public relations skills to assist with both national accounts and local businesses. She is currently working toward an MS in administration at Central Michigan University.

David R. McGhee, CAS '05, was selected to participate in the American Express/National Urban League Emerging Leaders Program in Flint, Mich. McGhee works at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Flint, a local youth-serving organization that currently holds a partnership with the Urban League. He also serves on the board of trustees of the Flint Public Library and has his own blog, McGhee's Manifesto.

Kevin P. Mlutkowski, SBA '05, has been appointed as director of Sustainability of the American Concrete Institute.



Mlutkowski joined the American Concrete Institute in November 2003 and was promoted to manager of Marketing in June 2007. Since then, Mlutkowski has been instrumental in publishing "The Sustainable Concrete Guide-Strategies and Examples" and "The Sustainable Concrete Guide-Applications," organizing the annual ACI Concrete Sustainability Forum and representing ACI at Greenbuild and other sustainability-related exhibitions. Mlutkowski will serve as ACI's staff representative to the Concrete Joint Sustainability Initiative. Mlutkowski received his BS in technical communication with chemistry minor from Lawrence Technological University and MBA from Oakland University. A Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED AP), Mlutkowski serves on the board of directors for the U.S. Green Building Council Detroit Regional Chapter and as a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee in Berkley, Mich.

Jaime Sinutko RN, MSN, SON '09, and '00, assumed the daunting position of Director of Nursing at Rochester College over one year ago and is pleased to announce that the State of Michigan's Board of Nursing has approved the self-study and site visit at Rochester College

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Retired teacher draws from life experiences

Friends come in all shapes and sizes, and in Judy (Schmidt) Lehman's world they might even be woodland creatures.

Lehman, CAS '67, is the illustrator of the Walnut Grove series of children's books that feature the adventures of Sammy the squirrel and assorted friends. An elementary education alumna, Lehman sees the illustrations as another way to reach children.

"My art has always been part of the education process," Lehman explains. "Oakland gave me such a great sense of teaching. I was a student who always had 'whys' and 'how comes.' I had the most wonderful professors."

The elementary school teacher's hobby-turned-second-job teaching porcelain painting grew into a full-time career. She published the guide "Create Your Own Treasures" and gave seminars across the country before retiring with her husband, George, to Hubbard Lake, Mich., 14 years ago.

Then Lehman's daughter-in-law, Dana, wanted to create *Adventures at Walnut Grove: A Lesson about Teasing* as a Christmas present for her two sons. She asked Lehman to illustrate the book, which encourages children to treat others as they would like to be treated.

The resulting book recently won a Mom's Choice Awards silver award, given to those who provide "quality family-friendly media, products and services."

For Lehman, the book's message was particularly meaningful: Days before her 16th birthday she had surgery to remove cancer that wrapped around two tendons and ligaments in her right hand, leaving her with limited mobility in that hand. The experience instilled in her a sense of gratitude.

"I'm thankful for every day I've had," says Lehman.

A friend saw the original handmade book and suggested that the Lehmans publish it. They did — and the books *I Double Dare You* and *I Can Do It* soon followed.

Lehman opts to forgo payment for her work on the books, instead guiding Lehman Publishing (www.lehmanpublishing.com) to donate a portion of the proceeds to children's cancer research, as well as local charities.

"All three books teach life lessons, even for adults," Lehman says. "The values we have in them make the kids realize how important they are. I'm honored to be able to do these books. It's a tremendous thing to be a part of." ■

By Cara Catallo, a freelance writer from Clarkston, Mich.

Alumni Profile



Award-winning economist helps shed light on public policy

The Lucite paperweight on his desk at California State University, Sacramento, is a constant reminder to **Rob Wassmer, SBA '83**, of the *Wall Street Journal* award he received in his senior year as an economics major at Oakland University.

Through the years, that Outstanding Student Award has served as inspiration and led to an economics master's degree from Binghamton University and a Ph.D. in economics from Michigan State University.

Currently a professor and the chairperson of the Public Policy and Administration Department at Sacramento State, Dr. Wassmer earlier this year received the university's Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award for his contributions to the field of economics and public policy.

The son of an engineer and a teacher (OU alumna **Sandra Wassmer, MA '85**), Wassmer grew up in Warren, Mich., and intended to major in engineering. His switch to economics resulted from his studies with OU professors Augustin Fosu and Eleftherios Botsas, who made the field relevant to his desire to learn how the economy functions.

"My motivation for going into the public policy side of economics arose from what I saw living on the boundary of

Detroit," he says. "I observed firsthand the problems of urban abandonment, urban blight and suburban sprawl, and wondered how we could do better."

Understanding the causes of urban sprawl and how it could be controlled is one of Dr. Wassmer's significant contributions to the field.

In addition to the courses he teaches in public economics, statistics and public policy, Dr. Wassmer has supervised more than 80 master's theses, published extensively in academic journals, written articles for mainstream publications and is often called upon by radio and television broadcasters to discuss the role of economics in public policy.

With his expertise in public policy, he's been asked to advise such groups as the California Debt Investment Advisory Commission, National Education Association and Brookings Institution.

Dr. Wassmer, his wife and two teenage sons have called California home since 1995. In his free time, he enjoys challenging himself on mountainous road bike tours such as California's Death Ride or in the qualifier for Colorado's Leadville Mountain Bike Race. ■

By Alice Rhein, a freelance writer from Huntington Woods, Mich.

School of Nursing. Starting in the fall of 2011, the first traditional nursing school begins on the campus of Rochester College. The first class will graduate in 2014.

Jennifer Viano, CAS '04, joined the Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation as chief executive officer in April 2010. One of the important objectives of the Foundation, which helps people affected by the disease, is to increase awareness of cutaneous lymphoma and help people learn about becoming involved in its mission.

Nicole Wilkins, SHS '06, took home one of the top prizes during the Ms. International, Fitness International and Figure International finals at Veterans Memorial in Columbus, Ohio. Wilkins won the Figure International for the second year in a row. She received \$16,000 from Steve Downs of MHP, a trophy from Brian Cavanaugh of GNC and a Tony Nowak jacket and congratulations from actor and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

2010s

Cassandra Ricketts, CAS '10, recently passed the Michigan state licensing exam for property and casualty insurance. She is currently employed at Verlinde Insurance Agency in Richmond.

Engagements & Weddings

Kevin Cataldo, SHS '11, and **Jessica Pike, SHS '09**, are pleased to announce their engagement. Kevin and Jessica met while participating in intercollegiate athletics at OU. Jessica was a member of the women's basketball team (2005-2009), and Kevin was a member of the cross country and track and field teams (2006-2011).

Tinoush Shifteh, SBA '98, was engaged to marry Ashley Vedros on August 27, 2011, in Manhattan Beach, Calif. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Anousha Shifteh of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and the bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Steve Vedros of Tulsa, Okla. He graduated from Wylie E. Groves High School in Birmingham, Mich., and earned his M.B.A. from Wayne State University in Detroit. She graduated from Memorial High School and the University of Tulsa. He is a banker with Wells Fargo, and she is an advertising account executive.

Births & Adoptions

Charles Archer, CAS '01, and **Juliana Archer (Pete), SEHS '06**, welcomed their first child, Adelina Grace, on January 31, 2011. Mommy and daddy are proud of their bundle of joy!

Darren O'Brien, CAS '96, and his wife, Christy, welcomed their seventh child, Nolan Benedict, on March 9, 2011. Nolan joins older siblings Trinity (9), Aidan (8), Felicity (6), Liam (5), Claire (3), and Sean (2).



Michael Simon, CAS '96, and **Michelle Simon (Strong), CAS '01**, welcomed Matthew

Nicholas Simon on July 27, 2010. Matthew was born at Hurley Medical Center in Flint, Mich.

Deaths

Garrett C. Albright, CAS '72, died February 19, 2011

Alan N. Bondurant, CAS '93, died May 25, 2011

Kathleen M. Calhoun, SEHS '87, died July 1, 2011

Lois A. Cumming, MAT '85, SEHS '78, died January 6, 2011

Rita Datta, MA '80, CAS '77, died April 21, 2011

Terry M. Davison, MA '00, BGS '95, died April 19, 2011

John R. Dei, SON '88, died May 20, 2011

Frank Dierwa, BGS '78, died April 1, 2011

Sona Nuvart Dolikian, MAT '74, died April 29, 2011

Carolyn K. Foreman, CAS '70, died February 18, 2011

Paul F. Grochowski, SBA '84, died February 10, 2011

Joyce A. Haislip, M.D., CAS '92, died February 16, 2011

Deena Jo Heide-Diesslin, CAS '73, died February 28, 2011

Kimberly A. Hunter, SEHS '06, died March 8, 2011

Victoria E. Kordel, BGS '84, died January 29, 2011

Kenneth M. Levine, D.O., CAS '73, died December 7, 2010

Martin W. Lietke, Jr., CAS '73, died April 9, 2011

Robert McDonald, CAS '69, died April 6, 2011

James W. Moffet, CAS '74, died May 31, 2011

Nancy J. Norman, BGS '95, died January 25, 2010

Barbara L. Pryor, SEHS '85, died July 1, 2011

Robert P. Radtke, MAT '73, died October 2, 2010

Sylvia A. Samarjian, BGS '82, died September 29, 2010

Juanita Shaughnessy, MA '78, CAS '75, died March 9, 2011

Georgia Shipp, MAT '70, died February 6, 2011

Douglas Stenzel, CAS '69, died April 21, 2011

Michael L. Thomas, MBA '81, died February 4, 2011

James J. VanRaaphorst, CAS '79, died March 3, 2010

Brian K. Vought, SECS '81, died January 28, 2011

Craig S. Wilbraham, CAS '73, died August 14, 2010

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History was made on Nov. 9, 2011, at Oakland University when it hosted the Republican Presidential Debate. Set in the transformed O'rena of OU's Athletics Center, the debate featured eight candidates vying for the GOP nomination. The Michigan Republican Party and CNBC co-sponsored the debate, which was watched by more than 3 million viewers around the world. OU students, alumni and supporters were among more than 1,400 who attended the event. More about the debate can be viewed at oakland.edu/debateatoakland. ●



"Scholarships have added a dimension to my undergraduate experience that has allowed me to aim higher and to pursue my dreams. Opportunities are immense at OU, and much of it is possible because of alumni and donor giving. I am extremely grateful."

– **Subha Hanif**, biology major, Honors College and class of 2013

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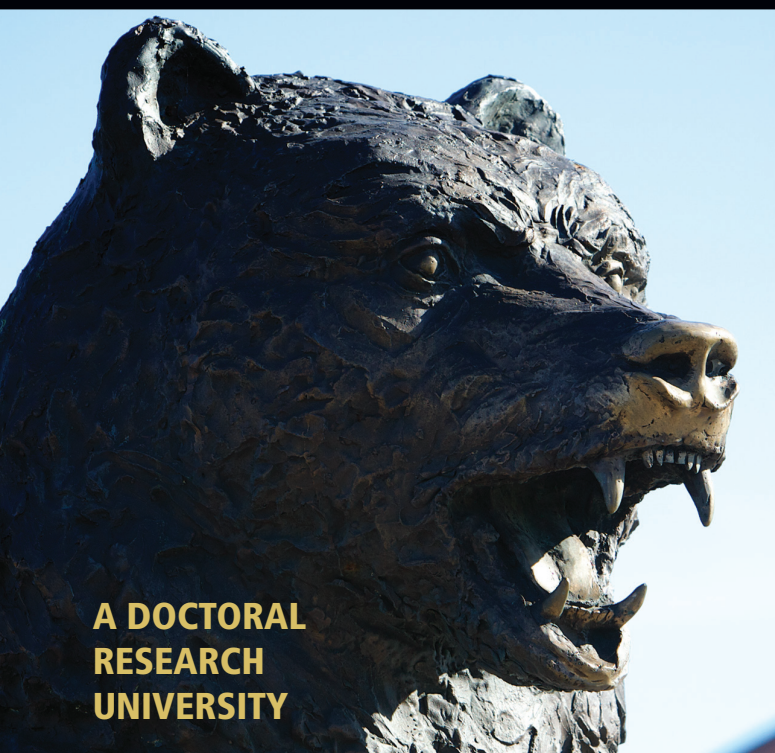
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