

**Agendum  
Oakland University  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
March 6, 2015**

**APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE FOR ANN V. NICHOLSON  
A Recommendation**

- 1. Division and Department:** Academic Affairs, Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
- 2. Introduction:** In accordance with Article IX of the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, honorary degrees may be awarded by the Board of Trustees in recognition of distinguished accomplishment and service within the scope of the arts and letters, sciences, professions, and public service as recognized and supported by the University. The awarding of honorary degrees reaffirms Oakland University's scholarly, creative, and humanitarian values and ties the University to the community at large.

Trustee Emerita Ann V. Nicholson has made a significant contribution to Oakland University and the lives of its students over the past two decades. She served as a member of the Oakland University Board of Trustees from September 1994 to August 2010. Trustee Emerita Nicholson served as vice chair and chair of the Board of Trustees, where her leadership and support resulted in major capital improvements to the University and aided in keeping tuition and fee increases as low as possible during a time of dramatic economic change, while maintaining fiscal commitment to the integrity of Oakland University's core educational experience.

Trustee Emerita Nicholson also served the Board as a member and chair of the Finance and Personnel Advisory Committee and the Investment Advisory Committee, as a member of the University Affairs Advisory Committee, as a member of the Finance, Audit and Investment Advisory Committee, as a Board Liaison to the Student Apartments Design-Build Committee, as a member of the President's Campaign Council, and as a co-chair of Oakland University's first capital campaign "Innovation and Opportunity – the Campaign for Oakland University."

As former Board of Trustees Chair Henry Baskin said of Nicholson, "Her primary focus was the best interest of the students." As a Board member and as a donor in partnership with her husband James, Trustee Emerita Nicholson has been a strong supporter of Oakland University's programs and initiatives. The Nicholsons are members of the Meadow Brook Society which recognizes donors who have given \$500,000 to \$1 million to the University. Their gifts have benefited students through support of programs in the School of Nursing, School of Business Administration, Kresge Library, and Department of Music, Theatre and Dance. They have also generously funded programs in Women Studies and Mathematics, as well as Athletics, Meadow Brook Hall, Oakland University Alumni Association, and Meadow Brook

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Theatre. They provided funding for events such as Keeper of the Dream and Student Life Lecture Series. Their support of the Honors College also included a commissioned sculpture, Echo Cognito by Joseph Wesner, which continues to enhance the Oakland campus.

Ann Nicholson's dedication to OU students is evidenced in the scholarships that she has been instrumental in creating. Among her donations is \$500,000 for an endowed scholarship for future medical students. Her gifts have created scholarships in the College of Arts and Sciences, Eye Research Institute, and the performing arts. Trustee Emerita Nicholson has a history on the Board of Trustees working to keep tuition affordable and sharing her expertise to address University business affairs. Her dedicated work with Mary Beth Snyder on the campus student apartments led to them being named the Ann V. Nicholson Student Apartments.

The Honorary Degree Committee recommends Trustee Emerita Nicholson as a candidate for the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities *Honoris Causa* for her dedication to the students of Oakland University as evidenced by outstanding service with the OU Board of Trustees and ongoing support of student programs and scholarships across the University.

3. **Previous Board Action:** The Board of Trustees periodically awards honorary degrees at its Formal Sessions.
4. **Budget Implications:** None.
5. **Educational Implications:** The awarding of honorary degrees is an established tradition in academe, by which the University reaffirms its scholarly, creative, and humanitarian values and its ties to the wider community.
6. **Personnel Implications:** None.
7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost has recommended approval of the recipient to receive an Honorary Degree.

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8. Recommendation

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities *Honoris Causa* to Ann V. Nicholson

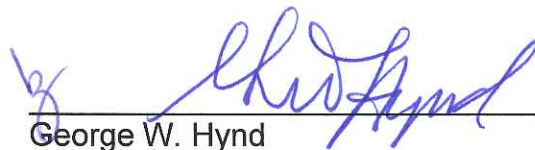
9. Attachments: None.

Submitted to the President

on 2/26, 2015 by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James P. Lentini, D.M.A.  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
and Provost

Recommended on 2/27, 2015  
to the Board for Approval by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George W. Hynd  
President