

**Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
August 13, 2018**

**APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE FOR GARY WOZNIAK
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.

Gary Wozniak is a social entrepreneur and Oakland University alumnus (BS Psychology) who founded RecoveryPark (2012) a nonprofit with a goal of creating jobs and transforming communities. RecoveryPark's mission is to create jobs for people who have barriers to employment including veterans, ex-convicts, the unemployed, individuals with limited education or literacy, and those struggling with mental illness. RecoveryPark's Associate Support Platform coordinates three-years of supportive services for associates. Coaches work closely with each associate to ensure they have access to support and services that remove barriers to employment.

The work of RecoveryPark speaks to the challenges Wozniak himself faced after his release from prison. Prior to his conviction, he had been a successful businessman owning one of the first Jet's Pizza franchises and also a successful stockbroker. After prison, he had limited options for employment and ultimately volunteered at Self-Help Addiction Rehabilitation (SHAR) where his addiction had been treated and he worked his way up to a Chief Development Officer in 2008. During his time at SHAR he developed an interest in urban farming and its potential for holistic client treatment and job creation. This germ of an idea led to his founding of RecoveryPark in 2012 and RecoveryPark Farms in 2013.

RecoveryPark Farms is a centerpiece of Wozniak's vision. An urban agriculture enterprise, RecoveryPark Farms grows fresh, local chef-requested specialty produce to restaurants in a 300 mile radius using "novel lighting technology" that supports sustainable year-round growing. The farm is currently 50 acres and is not only producing jobs and produce but also is revitalizing neighborhoods. In their agreement with the City of Detroit, RecoveryPark Farms agreed that a majority of its workers would be Detroit residents, that they would remove all blighted structures within a year and have at least three acres of hoop houses within two years. The goal is to have 300 associates when the farm is fully built out.

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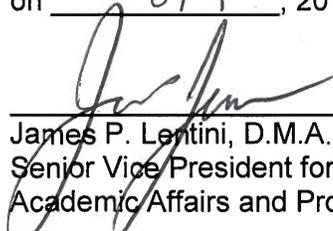
Embedded in the mission of RecoveryPark is the revitalization of Detroit by taking a sparsely populated area, demolishing abandoned and decrepit buildings, creating walkable neighborhoods and providing community gathering space. He has created a community garden where residents can grow and harvest their own fresh produce and has created seating at a bus stop near the farm. RecoveryPark has rehabilitated the Chene-Ferry Market and has made plans to host summer concerts in partnership with the Chamber Music Society of Detroit and the Raven Lounge. He also is working with the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to find ways to utilize storm water to support the farm while keeping it out of sewers.

The faculty of the MPA program in their nomination said, "We believe that Gary offers an inspiring example of the power of second chances and has become an exemplar of humanitarian values and civic contribution." The Honorary Degree Committee, after careful deliberation concurs and recommends Gary Wozniak receive the honorary degree Doctor of Humanities *Honoris Causa*.

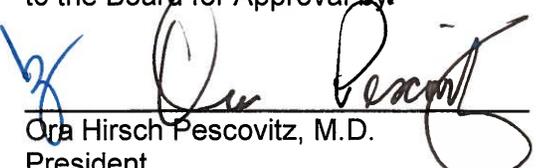
3. **Previous Board Action:** The Board of Trustees periodically awards honorary degrees at its Formal Sessions.
4. **Budget Implications:** None.
5. **Educational Implications:** The awarding of honorary degrees is an established tradition in academe, by which the University reaffirms its scholarly, 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.
8. **Recommendation:** RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities *Honoris Causa* to Gary Wozniak.
9. **Attachments:** None.

Submitted to the President

on 8/9, 2018 by


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

Recommended on 8/10, 2018
to the Board for Approval by


Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President