

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

**APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE FOR JOHN VAN CAMP
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.

John Van Camp has dedicated his life working for social justice. From his childhood activism, to his work in the Peace Corp, to a 45-year career at Southwest Solutions in Detroit, the thread unifying his experience has been a belief that the weakest among us deserve the same opportunities and benefits that others in our society enjoy. A native of Romeo, Michigan, Van Camp graduated from Oakland University with a degree in Political Science. After graduation, he worked in Europe as a steel rigger, in India with the Peace Corps and served in Vietnam.

After returning from overseas, Van Camp attended Wayne State University and earned a Masters of Social Work. While there, he met the executive director of a new organization, Southwest Solutions. He began his career there as an assistant to the executive director in 1973 and became the organization's second executive director in 1981.

Under Van Camp, the mission of Southwest Solutions expanded beyond its start as a mental health agency whose mission was to help the mentally ill live in the community by providing psychiatric counseling and medication. Van Camp believed that reintegrating the mentally ill and homeless into the community also required providing decent, affordable housing and support services, and actively participating in neighborhood revitalization and economic development. Today, Southwest Solutions provides services in counseling, housing and economic success. Southwest Counseling Solutions' 350 psychiatrists, social workers, counselors and educators provide bilingual services to more than 16,000 individuals and families each year through four Centers of Excellence. Southwest Housing Solutions encompasses the nonprofit Southwest Housing Corporation and is the largest multifamily developer in southwest Detroit. The organization strategically selects abandoned and blighted properties and replaces them with residential and commercial buildings in order to revitalize neighborhoods. Finally, Southwest Solutions added the Southwest Economic Solutions to help families achieve economic success through home ownership, financial literacy, workforce development and adult literacy services.

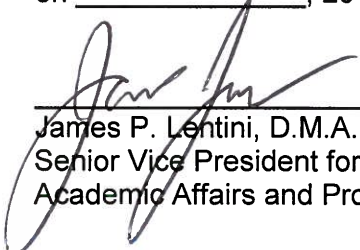
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Throughout his career at Southwest Solutions, Van Camp has identified the barriers faced by vulnerable populations and has found solutions to create opportunity where none existed. The impact he and his organization have had on southwest Detroit is extensive and intended to make long-term positive change both in the community and in the individuals who live there. No individual is left behind due to a barrier. Added strengths are Van Camp's commitment to engaging the community in finding solutions that work for them and his naturally collaborative nature which forges strong partnerships to achieve positive outcomes.

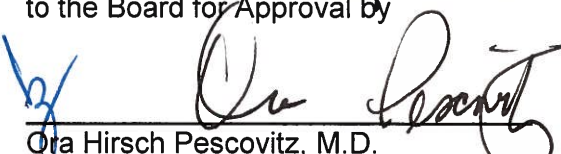
Dean Kevin Corcoran of the College of Arts and Sciences wrote "Mr. Van Camp truly demonstrates the high values this award is meant to recognize, as evidenced by a 45-year career dedicated to social justice for mentally ill populations. His many accomplishments have left a lasting impact, both for the clients he has served and the communities touched by his work, and have established partnerships and collaborations that will, for the many years to come, provide a foundation of support for vulnerable citizens in Southeastern Michigan." The Honorary Degree Committee agrees with Dean Corcoran's assessment of the contributions of John Van Camp and recommend he receive the 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 John Van Camp.
- 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