

**SBA 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Gala Celebration**  
**Presented by the Elliott Foundation**  
**Saturday, May 21, 2022**

**President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz Remarks**

- Welcome to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Oakland University's School of Business Administration, now, by the way, in its 52<sup>nd</sup> year.
  
- As you know, the two-year delay in our celebration was caused by the pandemic. I think we can all agree, a celebration of the great accomplishments of SBA over the past five decades is well worth the wait.
  
- Thank you, Mayor Barnett, for your ongoing support to Oakland. We are so proud to include you among our accomplished alumnus. And a special thank you for emceeding tonight's celebration.
  
- Also...thank you, Dean Michael Mazzeo for your many years of service to Oakland University.... Your leadership and vision have been invaluable in shaping SBA and positioning the school for ongoing growth.

- Along with Dean Mazzeo's contributions, SBA wouldn't be what it is today without the collaborative vision, dedication and generosity of several people who we are honored to have with us tonight...
  
- Please join with me in a gesture of appreciation to....
  - Hugh and Nancy Elliott
  - Craig and Ann Stinson
  - SBA Board of Visitors
  - Kim and Ken Janke, who serves as the chair of the Board of Visitors
  - Thank you for your unflinching support for Oakland University, and leading by example.
  
- Your efforts in supporting SBA and Oakland University are a case study in this evening's theme, "Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Leadership."
  
- As invaluable friends to Oakland, your example helps us to look for innovative and entrepreneurial approaches so we succeed in meeting our challenges...
  
- And your leadership has helped to illuminate the path into the future.

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- Philanthropy has played a central role in SBA's evolution, and has been invaluable in supporting the backbone of SBA – our outstanding faculty.
- I'd like to take a moment to extend my appreciation to SBA faculty member Frank Cardimen for his work in the International Initiatives Fund.... a program established by a generous gift from Craig and Ann Stinson in 2014.
- Frank is familiar to many of us, and has taught in SBA since 1979.
- Under Frank's leadership, the International Initiatives Fund has helped to elevate the reputation of SBA... and support opportunities for OU students to gain insight from an international business experience.
- Another example of SBA's innovative and entrepreneurial approach to education is the Student Managed Investment Fund, supported by the Kresge Foundation.
  - That program provides OU student-portfolio managers and competitive edge as they make their way in the investment world.

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- Last, I'd like to take a few moments to put this... the 50th anniversary of the School of Business Administration... into perspective.
- If you make it to fifty years in any endeavor – whether it is marriage or a business school – you earn the privilege of covering your accomplishment in gold.
- While it's always a good feeling to look back and appreciate your accomplishments in a relationship, endeavor or in navigating through the changes in higher education over the last half-century, it's also important to realize that your past success is a foundation upon which to build on the educational needs of today's students....
- So, for a moment, I'd like to point out that with 50 years behind us, the years ahead look extremely bright and promising.
- In January, SBA was named one of the nation's most outstanding business schools, according to the Princeton Review. That ranking goes along with a similar ranking in 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017 and 2016.
- *U.S. News & World Report* again recognized the Oakland University School of Business in its 2023 edition of Best Graduate Schools under the specialty of Best Part-Time MBA Programs.

- In addition to being named on the national 2022 Best Business Schools list, the Princeton Review also recognized the OU School of Business on its list of Best Business Schools in the Midwest and its list of Best Online MBA Programs.
- Included in the Princeton Review ranking are student surveys. The following student comments offer the best testament to the impact our faculty are having....:
  - Professors here are “really awesome, helpful and smart.”
  - “The school benefits from professors connected to the real world and who have worked outside of academia.”
  - Oakland provides a “small school experience” in which any student “can easily get help from professors” who provide “so many opportunities.”
  - The school “has the support of many large corporations that recruit out of the student body” and the school really cares “about connecting you to new opportunities.”
- Quite simply, the reason for the success of the School of Business Administration is our expert SBA faculty, who teach a range of fundamental and rigorous courses that integrate theory, research and real-world experience, and provide students with solid academic preparation and practical skills necessary to succeed professionally.
- I like the sound of 50 years.... And I like the color of gold.... Not only is it the color of success... it goes well with black.

- Thank you.... Dean Mazzeo....SBA faculty...our many donors, and again, special thanks to Hugh and Nancy Elliott, Craig and Ann Stinson, the SBA Board of Visitors and the Elliott Foundation for all that you do to support Oakland University.
- And now, it gives special pleasure to introduce Dean Michael Mazzeo.