As I was reading about this year’s Exemplary Employee Award recipients, I was so impressed and inspired by the work, and breadth of representation from around the university.

This year’s recipients come from all over campus and perform a diverse range of essential services in student affairs, campus cleaning, tutoring, advising, maintenance, human resources, libraries, and marketing, among other areas of the university.

Your accomplishments reveal more than your success at Oakland; they show us the quality of who you are as a person. There are many examples:

- “Katie is the consummate teammate and role models leadership.”
• “Joshua inspires his coworkers to want to cooperate.”

• “Marlene puts in countless hours to accommodate the many requests that come her way.”

• “Everything Clarisse does is always 110 percent.”

• “Willie deals with difficult questions with poise and a warm smile on her face. She has transformed Learning and Organizational Development at OU.”

• “Amy’s positivity is an immeasurable asset to Kresge Library.”

- The praise delivered by your colleagues published in the award booklet is only the beginning of understanding the true impact of your contribution to Oakland University.
While the faces, departments and expertise vary, the recipients of the 2020 Exemplary Employee Awards share many traits.

The descriptions of their work reflect a deep passion and commitment for helping people, and tireless support for the mission of Oakland University.

To be exemplary is not simply to be held up as an example.

Exemplary in the context of these awards means each of you are a pillar upon which the operation, function and progress of our university depends.

For this university to be strong, each link in the chain that makes up the great chain that binds us as a community must be strong. And each of you, for the many reasons cited in your profile, play a vital role and are an essential link that ties our community together with a sense of purpose and pride.
Your support can be seen in how you help prepare students; make sure our campus buildings are clean, sanitized and safe; connect with students in times of need; advocate for new and better ways to make sure OU is a learning and development organization; and, provide our outstanding faculty with the support they need to engage and inspire our students.

Simply put: Each of you lead by example and represent the best qualities of a compassionate and engaged university.

On behalf of the OU leadership team and the OU community, thank you for your work, determination and dedication.