

Advancing OU

*March 3, 2003*

Colleagues --

As you read in my last e-mail, our budget situation is very serious. Watching the campus community pull together to identify ways to reduce our costs is satisfying, though not surprising. It reinforces my confidence that we are prepared and focused to continue advancing our mission during these troubling financial times. I appreciate the efforts of the OU team and encourage you to keep a close watch on OU's finances and continue to share your cost-saving ideas.

Even as we anticipate Governor Granholm's announcement of proposed FY04 cuts in state appropriations later this week, our actions and achievements demonstrate we are still focused on the key strategies that will help us create a distinctive experience at Oakland University.

### **Inspired Faculty**

The achievements and accomplishments of our inspired faculty members continue to call attention to the high caliber research, scholarship and creative endeavors that take place in our community. Following I share only a few examples:

The Board of Trustees recently appointed Professor **Paul Tomboulian** as our newest Distinguished Professor, joining Professors **Sheldon Appleton**, **Ron Cramer** and **Jane Eberwein** as the current OU professors with this honor. A charter OU faculty member who is truly a pioneer, Professor Tomboulian is well deserving of this recognition. You can read more about his accomplishments on The News @ OU website.

**Barry Winkler**, professor of biomedical sciences and researcher at the Eye Research Institute, is a fine example of how our faculty members' research will have a lasting impact on society. Professor Winkler received more than \$330,000 in a grant from the National Institutes of Health to continue his research into eye disease and retinal detachment. Professor and Chair of OU's Engineering department, **Ishwar Sethi's** expertise in computer science was further acknowledged when he received nearly \$100,000 in a grant from Mandala Sciences Inc. to research computer tools for medical outcomes analysis. His objective is to investigate database-mining methods to build predictive models for various medical outcomes.

For more information about faculty research grants, visit the Board of Trustees website, then select Archived Agendas and review items that recommend accepting grants to Oakland University.

### **Campus Recognition**

In January, President George W. Bush invited **Lenwood Compton**, an OU education student, to be a guest at the State of the Union address and participate in a national panel on mentoring. Lenny came to President Bush's attention as a result of his outstanding service as a member of AmeriCorps. You may recall Lenny also served as a Freedom Corps greeter, an honor bestowed on individuals who best exemplify the President's call to service, at Bush's Oakland County International Airport visit last October. We are very proud of Lenny's accomplishments and pleased with the national light it shines on Oakland and OU's AmeriCorps organization. To read more about Lenny's visit to Washington, see the special section in The News @ OU and read the article in the Winter 2003 issue of OU Magazine (you can find that in your campus mailbox or [online](#)

After three championship-filled years in **Division I athletics**, Oakland is now in the midst of our first yearlong campus-wide effort to study our athletics programs as part of the NCAA Division I certification process. Division I programs must be certified every 10 years to ensure the integrity of an institution's athletics operation. Specific areas include academic and fiscal integrity, governance, rules compliance, and commitment to equality and student-athlete welfare and sportsmanship. I invite you to learn more about the certification process - and comment on OU's progress - by reading the certification information on the athletics website at ([www.ougrizzlies.com/ncaa%20Certification/ncaafont.html](http://www.ougrizzlies.com/ncaa%20Certification/ncaafont.html)).

I would like to recognize the **committee members** for OU's Keeper of the Dream Awards Banquet. Once again, this annual campus event displayed OU's dedication to creating a scholarly community strengthened by diversity. Pulling together an event of this caliber takes tremendous attention to detail and is a great example of teamwork. OU's Keeper of the Dream Award Banquet is further distinguished by its strong ties to our community. This year, Ford Motor Company was the primary event sponsor and provided our keynote speaker - Edsel B. Ford II, board director. Four scholarships were supported by longtime friends of OU: Bank One, Champion Enterprises, Oakland University Alumni Association and William Beaumont Hospitals each sponsored a \$5,000 scholarship award.

Students who received the Keeper of the Dream scholarship awards for demonstrating strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership in breaking down cultural stereotypes and in promoting interracial understanding were: **Crystal Allen**, junior, elementary education; **Steven Townsend**, sophomore, biochemistry; **Crystal Wilkerson**, senior, elementary education; and **Sumeera Younis**, sophomore, women's studies and sociology.

### **Partnership Updates**

This fall, OU will co-host here on campus the **First National Congress on Pre-Symptom Medicine** with the Early Warning Healthcare Institute. The congress will include presentations from leading scientists, practitioners and economists that focus on the latest developments in pre-symptom medicine, billed as the solution to the health care crisis. Sessions will feature the economic and societal impacts of electron beam tomography technology in predicting early signs of heart disease and colon cancer, and

suggest treatment modalities and protocols leading to disease prevention. This will give Oakland yet another opportunity to shine as distinguished visitors come to our campus for this exciting first-time event.

Our university was instrumental in December in forming a new **Oakland County SmartZone** -- in partnership with Oakland County, Rochester Hills, Southfield and Lawrence Tech. This initiative expands on our already strong partnerships with businesses in the surrounding communities and provides greater opportunity for our faculty members and students to share and gain practical experience. The SmartZone combines the expertise and innovation of university researchers with the production of business and the tax support of cities to expand existing technology labs and attract research companies.

Pending Board of Trustee's approval, Oakland University's partnership with **Cooley Law School** will soon expand with the proposed addition of a satellite on our campus. Under the satellite arrangement, Cooley will offer the first two years of its course of instruction at OU. A night section of these courses begins in May, a morning section will begin in September and an afternoon section in January 2004. Check the News @ OU for more information.

### **Fund-Raising Activity**

And, speaking of support for our university and mission, as we move forward with our capital campaign, gifts from faculty and staff send a strong message to our friends off campus. Nothing says that we believe strongly in our mission and direction more than putting our actions behind our words. And, you sent that message loud and clear through the results of this year's All-University Fund Drive.

This year, **more than 400 employees** participated, raising more than \$160,000, a 37-percent increase over last year. I am extremely pleased and proud of this level of participation. It clearly demonstrates your commitment to our vision of delivering a distinctive educational experience to our students and providing funds for research for our faculty.

Our AUFD co-chairs -- **Pat Nicosia** (retired budget director) and **Elaine Didier** (dean of the library) -- did a tremendous job in their dedication to building ongoing support for Oakland University. For articles about the AUFD and specific employee gifts, see the [Faculty & Staff](#) section of The News @ OU.

### **New E-Mail System**

I am looking forward, as I am sure you are, to the security and performance benefits of **OU's new e-mail system** (Mirapoint). If you are reading this message, the system is operational, and we are off to a good start! If you have questions about the new e-mail system, I encourage you to check the IT website where they have dedicated pages to providing updated information. You can find it all at: [www.oakland.edu/it/new\\_email/](http://www.oakland.edu/it/new_email/).

## **Student Athletes**

I was pleased to see the article in the newly redesigned OU Magazine highlighting the **success of our student athletes in the classroom**. We certainly also continue to enjoy success on the fields of competition. Congratulations to our women's **swimming and diving team** for its second straight National Independent Conference title, which they won in our pool this past weekend, and to the men's team for its fourth-place finish.

And, good wishes are in order for our Golden Grizzlies **men's and women's basketball teams** as they compete in the Mid-Con tournament this weekend in Kansas City. Tournament champions win an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

## **The year ahead and the year in review**

Even as we face our economic challenges, I am confident the Oakland academic and administrative team is focused and prepared to emerge even stronger. We only need to review our recent accomplishments and our budget development guidelines to see that our emphasis on students, quality academic programming, research, scholarship and creative endeavors will pull us through with distinction.

To review highlights of our 2002 achievements, I encourage you to visit the Year in Review Web page from The News @ OU.

Gary Russi