

President Russi

2006 New Student Convocation

*August 29, 2006*

Good afternoon. It's my pleasure to welcome everyone to the Oakland University campus – and to New Student Convocation. I'm pleased you and your family members are here today.

As you can see, our faculty and members of the platform party have donned their official academic regalia for this assembly. Please refer to your program for more about the significance of the many different robes and caps you see today.

Would members of the platform party please stand and be recognized when your name is called? Please hold your applause until everyone has been introduced.

- Ronald Sudol, Acting Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
- Jonathan Silberman, Dean of the School of Business Administration
- Kenneth Hightower, Dean of the School of Health Sciences
- Linda Thompson Adams, Dean of the School of Nursing
- Robert Wiggins, Associate Dean of the School of Education and Human Services
- Pieter Frick, Dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science, and
- Julie Voelck, Interim Dean of Kresge Library
- Susan Davies Goepp, Vice President for Development, Alumni and Community Engagement and Executive Director of the Oakland University Foundation
- John Beaghan, Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Virinder Moudgil, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
- Jude Nixon, director of The Honors College
- Mary Beth Snyder, Vice President for Student Affairs and
- Madalyn Miller, Student Congress President

Please join me in recognizing these individuals.

I would also like to thank our outstanding faculty, who dedicate their time and talent to ensure Oakland University students receive an outstanding education. Year after year, our faculty continue to bring distinction to Oakland through their extraordinary scholarship and service. Please join me in acknowledging their hard work.

As you will discover, these men and women are vital members of the Oakland University community, and committed to your success as a student. Now I'd like to talk directly to our new students.

You've already made one of the most important decisions of your college career, choosing Oakland University. I won't tell you the decisions get easier, but I will tell you that the professors, staff and everyone else you will meet at Oakland are here to help you succeed.

However, you will need to do your part. Visit with your advisers, meet with your professors and tap into the many resources available to you.

To make the most of your college experience, I encourage you to participate in activities outside the classroom. We have 150 student organizations and new ones are often being formed by students. From academic and club sports to multicultural, political and religious organizations, there is something for everyone.

Through the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance more than 100 student and faculty performances are offered throughout the school year. Also, come out and cheer on our Golden Grizzlies teams. Last March our women's basketball team won the Mid-Continent Conference tournament, giving them an automatic berth in the Division I tournament. We are proud of our women's basketball team, as well as all of our teams.

I hope you will find that your time at Oakland is the source of many fond memories that will last a lifetime. Your journey through Oakland's wide-ranging and distinctive academic and extracurricular programs will take you places no other university can.

I'm proud to say that Oakland is one of the largest universities in this country, yet recognized by our graduates as having a small campus feel that encourages personal interaction with professors.

And, we are one of only 82 universities in the country to be recognized as a doctoral research-intensive university by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. When you graduate from Oakland, you will be equipped with leadership skills that will allow you to make a meaningful difference in the workplace and society.

You will have honed your critical thinking skills, practiced effective communication, polished your technology skills and improved your interpersonal abilities through real-life applications and experiences. Once again, welcome to Oakland University! I am pleased that you chose us to be a part of your educational journey. You have made a *great* choice.