

**Oakland University
15th Annual Keeper of the Dream
Scholarship Awards Celebration
Oakland Center Banquet Rooms
February 23, 2007, 12:00 p.m.**

MC : Mary Beth Snyder

Good afternoon! Welcome to the 15th annual Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Celebration. I'm Mary Beth Snyder, vice president for Student Affairs at Oakland University. Thank you so much for joining our celebration today.

Many of you know that we first intended to hold this event on January 15. Our Michigan weather did not cooperate the night before and the next morning, so we postponed to today and were fortunate that most of our speakers and all of our scholarships recipients could be here.

You'll see in the program that Carmen Harlan from WDIV had planned to be our MC, but with the date change, regrettably could not be available. So, I am honored to serve as her replacement for our occasion honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

With the committed support of the surrounding community and our corporate partners over the years, Oakland's Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Celebration has grown into a remarkable event.

I would especially like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our good friends at DaimlerChrysler.

DaimlerChrysler has been the speaker sponsor for the past three years and a long-time source of academic scholarships to Oakland University students. To date, the DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund has provided more than \$3 million in scholarships to Oakland University students, helping to prepare the next generation of global leaders.

You'll see a sampling of that "next generation" later in our program when we hear directly from our scholarship recipients. Their achievements are noteworthy, and we look forward to even greater accomplishments once they graduate and enter into the workplace and raise families.

We have an exciting program today. It promises to be an afternoon full of celebration, in the spirit and vision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., culminating Oakland University's month-long celebration of African-American history and traditions – a celebration capped by the visit of our keynote speaker.

Before we get to her address, I would ask you to please remember to jot down any questions you might have on the note cards provided as you listen to the presentation. She has graciously agreed to take questions.

It is now my pleasure to welcome Mr. Frank Fountain, Chrysler Group Senior Vice President of External Affairs and Public Policy and President of the DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund who will introduce our distinguished speaker.

(Lead applause)

Frank Fountain:

- Thank you, Dr. Snyder, and good afternoon.
- At DaimlerChrysler, we are pleased to continue our long-standing support of this event. As a company, diversity continues to be one of our top priorities, both internally and in our local communities.
- I'd like to introduce a woman who shares our vision of a truly multicultural society and is a champion of civil rights.
- Ruby Dee is an accomplished actress, perhaps best known for her role in the 1950 film, "The Jackie Robinson Story."
- She broke ground in 1965 as the first black woman to play lead roles at the American Shakespeare Festival.

- She went on to star in many other highly-acclaimed films including “A Raisin in the Sun” and “Edge of the City,” both opposite Sidney Poitier.
- In the 1960s, she appeared in “Gone are the Days” and “The Incident,” two films that are credited with helping to pave the way for young African-American actors and filmmakers.
- Both Ruby Dee and her late husband Ossie Davis, have often been called “the first couple of the civil rights movement.”
- They survived McCarthyism. Although followed by FBI agents and out of work, they remained determined to keep raising money for families of lynching victims.

- They seemed to be everywhere during the '60s—in Selma, beside Dr. King as masters of ceremonies for the historic 1963 March on Washington, at Malcolm X's funeral.
- Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis were celebrated as "national treasures" when they received the National Medal of Arts in 1995.
- In 2000, they were presented with the Screen Actors Guild's highest honor, the Life Achievement Award.
- In 2004, they were saluted as a couple by the Kennedy Center, where it was said: "They have thrown open many a door previously shut tight to African American artists and planted the seed for the flowering of America's multicultural humanity."

- And, the recognition keeps coming. Just this month Ruby and Ossie won a Grammy Award for “Best Spoken Word Album” for their album “With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together.”
- Today, Ruby Dee remains just as passionate about civil rights as a member of the Congress of Racial Equality, the NAACP, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
- She once said: “The kind of beauty I want most is the hard-to-get kind that comes from within—strength, courage, dignity.”
- I’m sure that after hearing her speak today, you will agree with me that Ruby Dee exemplifies that kind of beauty.
- Please join me in welcoming, Ms. Ruby Dee.

Keynote Address – Ruby Dee:

The keynote address was given by Ruby Dee, a prominent African American actress and activist. She discussed the importance of representation in media and the role of artists in social change.

Dee highlighted the challenges faced by Black women in the entertainment industry and the need for more diverse storytelling. She emphasized the power of art to educate and inspire.

OS: [illegible]

Dee's speech was a powerful call to action for the industry and the audience alike.

She concluded by expressing her hope for a more inclusive and equitable future. Her words resonated deeply with the audience, who were inspired by her passion and commitment to social justice.

MC Mary Beth:

Thank you, Ms. Dee, for your moving talk and for sharing your experiences with us. We are deeply grateful.

As promised, Ms. Dee will now take questions from the audience. If you will pass your note cards to the center aisle, we will gather them from there.

Q&A (12 minutes)

(Mary Beth reads questions and Ruby responds.)

This now concludes our question and answer period. Let's once again show our warm Oakland thanks to Ms. Ruby Dee for being an inspiration to all of us here today. *(Lead applause)*

It is now time to move on to the scholarship awards presentation. To do so, I would like you to help me welcome to the podium, Gary Russi, president of Oakland University.

(Lead applause)

Dr. Russi:

- Thank you, Mary Beth, and thank you for being here as our mistress of ceremonies.
- We will honor six Oakland University students today for their leadership in working to promote racial understanding, for their role as mentors among their peers and community members, and for their efforts to help others.
- Thank you to our Legacy Scholarship Sponsors: Barnes and Noble at Oakland University, Beaumont Hospitals, Justice Marilyn Kelly, LaSalle Bank and the Oakland University Alumni Association.

- And, also our Heritage Scholarship Sponsor, the Ford Motor Company Fund, for your support in sponsoring these named scholarship awards.
- Please join me in recognizing these friends of the university who are making a lasting difference in the lives of Oakland's students. *(Lead applause)*
- I would like to extend a special thanks to our Speaker Sponsor, DaimlerChrysler Corporation.

(Lead applause)

- Please also join me in thanking and recognizing our "Champion Sponsors" this year, Champion Enterprises, Thomas M. Cooley Law School, and Volkswagon of America & Audi of America.

- The Keeper of the Dream event has been a rich tradition at Oakland for 15 years.
- This year's scholarship winners have helped carry out Dr. King's dream of unification, equality and justice.
- I am proud of each one of you and look forward to the many more accomplishments you will achieve during your time at Oakland.
- Now, I would like to invite Omar Brown-El, Director of OU's Center for Multicultural Initiatives, to the podium.

(Dr. Russi remains standing)

Omar Brown-El:

Thank you, Dr. Russi. Good afternoon.

Each year the campus looks forward to this event with great anticipation.

I am privileged to present, with Dr. Russi, Oakland University's 2007 Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards to six deserving students.

(Dr. Russi joins Omar at the podium)

Omar:

The Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Award recognizes Oakland University students who have demonstrated strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership in breaking down cultural stereotypes and in promoting interracial understanding.

This year's recipients have exemplified these ideals.

Brandon Svenson

Brandon has spent his time at Oakland University demonstrating positive leadership and teamwork.

As a Student Life Lecture Board member, he helped bring Imam W. Deen Mohammed to campus.

His lecture helped further inter-faith dialogue and helped promote peaceful relations among people.

Brandon is a junior mechanical engineering major and a member of The Honors College.

Let's take a moment to hear a few words from Brandon...

(Video clip of Brandon Svenson)

Omar:

We are pleased to present Brandon Svenson with the 2007 Barnes and Noble at Oakland University Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Brandon and representative of Barnes and Noble approach podium.)

Omar:

Tiffanye Teagarden

Tiffanye has worked hard to break down cultural barriers and to promote interracial understanding.

As a resident assistant, Tiffanye helped develop a Jeopardy Stereotype program to educate students about stereotypes in race, religion, gender, athletics and Greek life.

She is a junior psychology major and hopes to become a counselor one day.

Let's take a moment to hear from Tiffanye in her own words... ***(Video clip of Tiffanye Teagarden)***

Omar:

We are pleased to present Tiffanye Teagarden with the 2007 Beaumont Hospitals Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Lead applause as Tiffanye and representative of Beaumont Hospitals approach podium.)

Omar:

Sean Buono

Through his work as an orientation group leader, admissions intern and resident assistant, Sean has been instrumental in fostering interracial understanding.

He helped create the Grizzdance Film Festival, Oakland's first film competition with Student Video Productions and other offices on campus.

Sean is an Honors College student pursuing degrees in both mathematics and English and hopes to go on to a career in secondary education.

Let's hear from Sean in his own words...

(Video clip of Sean Buono)

Omar:

We are pleased to present Sean Buono with the 2007 Justice Marilyn Kelly Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Lead applause as Sean and Justice Kelly approach podium.)

Omar:

Kwame Everett

While at Oakland, Kwame has worked to build cultural unity and has helped minority students succeed.

He serves as president of the South Asia/India Club, an organization dedicated to the promotion and celebration of South Asia history, culture and heritage.

Kwame is also a King/Chavez/Parks mentor, encouraging students from underrepresented racial groups to pursue a college degree. He is a junior business economics major and a member of the prestigious ATiB program.

Let's hear more from Kwame... (Video clip of Kwame Everett)

Omar:

We are pleased to present Kwame Everett with the 2007 LaSalle Bank Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Lead applause as Kwame and LaSalle Bank representative approach the podium.)

Omar:

Matthew Kelly

Matthew cares deeply about bridging differences between students and breaking down stereotypes that exist on a college campus.

He served on the OU Student Congress as a legislator, and facilitates a COM 101 course where he helps educate freshmen on the importance of diversity.

Matthew is a junior music and communications major and planning a career in student affairs.

Let's hear more from Matthew...

(Video clip of Matthew Kelly)

Omar:

We are pleased to present Matthew Kelly with the 2007 Oakland University Alumni Association Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Lead applause as Matthew and OUAA representative approach the podium.)

Omar:

Aaron Kochenderfer

Aaron strives to make Oakland University a better place for all students, and embraces diversity in the process.

An active member of the OU Student Congress, he is a well-known student leader whom others rely on to provide direction, energy and passion. He helped create a Diversity Transition Workshop with fellow committee members. And, he spoke last year at Rochester High School about the importance of diversity.

Aaron is a junior political science major with a minor in communications. Let's hear more from Aaron...

(Video clip of Aaron Kochenderfer)

Omar:

We are pleased to present Aaron Kochenderfer with the 2007 Ford Motor Company Keeper of the Dream Award.

(Lead applause as Aaron and Ford Motor representative approach the podium.)

(Omar returns to his seat)

(Mary Beth returns to the podium)

MC Mary Beth:

Thank you, President Russi and Mr. Brown-El for presenting the scholarship recipients with their well-deserved awards.

You are a group of students that is certainly exceptional in your accomplishments, commitment and motivation, and clearly deserving of this recognition.

And thank you, again, to Ms. Ruby Dee.

Your words have made this afternoon truly memorable for all of us.

With the completion of our program today, this officially concludes Oakland University's African-American Celebration month. On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Oakland University, we are deeply grateful for your time here with us today.

Thank you, everyone, for supporting Oakland University's Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Celebration through your presence here today, your scholarship gifts and all that you do to share the dream and continue the journey that Dr. King began.

It has been an honor for me to be a part of this event and its ever-growing legacy within the community.
Good afternoon.

2/22/07

VIP Luncheon Remarks

Welcome - Dr. Russi:

- Welcome and thank you all for being here for our 15th annual Keeper of the Dream Celebration.
- Thank you again, Ms. Dee, for being here and sharing your thoughts and insights.
- We are very proud of our scholarship winners and appreciate the generous support of the sponsoring companies, individuals and organizations that have made their awards possible.
- We hold this luncheon in honor of our scholarship recipients. Congratulations again.
- Thank you. Please enjoy.

2/22/07