



Friday, March 3, 2000

Winners of top student awards announced

Oakland University announced the 2000 recipients of its most prestigious student honors, the Alfred G. Wilson and Matilda R. Wilson Awards and the Human Relations Award.

Mychal Thom of Monroe and Shawn McLernon of Rochester Hills won the Wilson awards; Michelle Guy of Farmington Hills won the Human Relations Award.

The Wilson awards are presented annually to an OU senior man and woman who have contributed as scholars, leaders and responsible citizens to the university community. They recognize students for outstanding academic achievement, commitment to improving campus life and concern for social problems. A university committee of students, faculty and administrative staff selects finalists that it recommends to OU President Gary D. Russi; then Russi chooses the winners.

Thom is an exceptional student athlete who has been a star player on Oakland's men's varsity basketball team for four years and captain for two. He majored in Biology and served on the Honors College Council, the Search Committee for Provost, a Telecounselor for Admissions, a diversity panelist, Alcohol and Other Drugs Council, Student-Athlete Advisory Council, Tetlin Alaska Mission and Habitat for Humanity.

"Mychal has consistently exemplified high scholarship, outstanding leadership and remarkable responsibility," said Barry Winkler, Ph.D., professor, Biomedical Sciences. "Individuals as immensely talented as Mr. Thom come along only once in awhile."

McLernon majored in Elementary Education and was a member in many campus groups including being president, Golden Key National Honor Society, founder, Silver Key Club, member, Student Association for Teacher Education, member, OU's Chapter of Student Against Destructive Decisions, member of C.A.R.E., and many others. She also was involved in other groups such as OU's Handicapped Support Services, Teaching and Learning Committee, Legislative Affairs Committee, Student Congress Scholarship Committee, Student Congress Disciplinary Committee and the Creating the Future Task Force.

"Shawn is comfortable working with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds and ages," said Jean Ann Miller, assistant director, Student Activities and Leadership Development. "She eagerly embraces new opportunities and does not shy away from challenges."

The Wilson Awards are an integral part of the annual graduation ceremony, this year on May 6, at which winners are presented with an individual plaque and \$500. OU adds the winner's names to a bronze plaque on campus.

The Human Relations Award is also an annual honor. It recognizes with \$500 a graduate who has made an outstanding contribution to intergroup understanding and conflict resolution in the Oakland University community.

Guy majored in communications in OU's College of Arts Sciences. She worked to improve race relations and multicultural understanding as member of the Association of Black Students, United Fronts, Student Congress, Student Advisory Board, Multicultural Advisory Board, Fuerza and Student Life Lecture Board. She also worked as a resident hall director and peer mentor leader.

"Michelle has demonstrated successful student leadership abilities and is well recognized by her peers, OU faculty and staff, for her generosity of time and effort to assist others and enrich them multiculturally," said Miller. "She has undeniably made significant contributions promoting interracial understanding and good will."

Oakland University is a state-supported institution of higher education located in suburban Oakland County, Michigan. OU offers undergraduate programs in 74 areas and graduate programs in 59 areas. Dedicated to preparing learners for the 21st-century workplace and society, the university is organized into the College of Arts and Science and the schools of Business Administration, Education and Human Services, Engineering and Computer Science, Health Science, and Nursing.

SUMMARY

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