

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2020  
Message from the President

Congratulations, Oakland University graduates.

I join your family, friends and mentors in wishing you the best on this day and in all your endeavors.

Today, you stand firmly, proudly and strongly as you take your first steps on the road to your future.

And indeed, you will find that the path ahead is filled challenges you can plan for, and some you cannot.

The key, it seems, is to keep open your hearts and minds because you never truly know where the road to the future leads, and you always need to be prepared to embrace a new challenge.

And, there are plenty ahead.

In the days, months and years ahead, you will make decisions that will collectively contribute to the portrait of your life and define your character – a character that we hope has been shaped by the values and education from your time at Oakland University.

By now, you have learned that life is a team sport. None of us succeed in life without the support, guidance and love of mentors, friends, and most of all, family.

Cherish this moment.

Remember this feeling.

This is not just an individual accomplishment, but truly a team success. Embrace your team – your friends, colleagues, teachers, family. Return their love and support by loving and supporting them.

In the future, when you look back at the challenges of 2020, may you be filled with greater resolve and a sense of purpose about the direction of your life.

My interpretation of the great and often-cited poem, "The Road Not Taken," by Robert Frost, is that a truly authentic person does not back away from a challenge, and does not flinch when faced with opportunity or the unexpected.

The road less traveled is often the path taken to make your dreams come true.

Frost wrote:

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

Be true to your values.

Be true to yourself.

Know that one person – you – can make a positive difference in not only another person's life, but in the future of your family, community and the world.

Congratulations members of the Oakland University Class of 2020.