

Monday, Apr 03, 2017

Pontiac students get glimpse of college life at 'shadow day'

Students from the International Technology Academy (ITA) in Pontiac visited Oakland University last week to experience a day in the life of an Honors College student. The high school students were paired with an Honors College student with whom they attended class, listened to research presentations and lunched in Vandenberg Cafeteria.

“Supporting aspirations is a key strength of us here at Oakland University,” said Graeme Harper, dean of OU’s Honors College. “We wanted to encourage the ITA students to envision the possibilities that a university education, and particularly, an honors education can offer them. That was what the day was all about – the revelation and celebration of possibility.”

The day started with an introduction from Dean Harper and a greeting by Anders Engnell, an ITA alum, former OU student body vice president and current Honors College student. The students then went to class and returned to Oak View Hall to hear Honors College thesis presentations from Engnell and Trevor Evans.



International Technology Academy students are pictured in Oak View Hall, home of the Honors College at Oakland University.

Evans presented his research on narrative literature of pre-medical students. The project involved interviewing pre-medical students to learn about their personal experiences, including why they chose to attend medical school, their academic background, extracurricular activities, family life and more.

Engnell spoke to the students about his research on urban evolution, with a focus on how cities like Pontiac can regain economic prosperity. He emphasized innovation as a core ingredient in the city’s comeback effort.

“Innovators . . . are the foundation for rebuilding the city,” Engnell told the group. “That means, in essence, that every single one of you are key, the method, to a city being revived.”

The shadow day was actively supported by Robin Michel, Honors College faculty fellow and Jason Sckrabulis, Honors College graduate assistant, along with Sherry Quinn, graduate recruiter. Trampus Burton, experiential learning coordinator, offered advice on service learning. Dean Harper and Claudia Petrescu, dean of graduate education, are planning to further develop this collaborative initiative in the 2017-20 academic year.

Learn more about the Honors College at oakland.edu/hc.



Trevor Evans shared his honors thesis regarding narrative literature of pre-medical students.



Anders Engnell spoke about his honors thesis, which examined a theory of urban evolution.