

## **OU to host event focused on breaking down employment barriers**

Oakland University is hosting a community event, "Breaking Down Barriers to Employment," which features a resource fair, presentations, breakout sessions and resume critiquing designed to help participants overcome obstacles to employment.

The event will take place from 3-5:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 10, in Elliott Hall Auditorium and Atrium, on Oakland's campus.

Presenters include employment experts from Jay Shop Inc., Michigan Works!, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and the Oakland University Adult Career Counseling Center.

Additionally, resume critiquing will be available throughout the event. All participants are encouraged to bring a copy of their resume to review with an employment expert.

Event facilitator Dr. Karen Markel said that people face many different barriers to employment, from physical and mental challenges, to various life circumstances. This event is designed to give them resources to be successful.

"No matter what people are facing, we want to help them overcome those barriers," said Markel, an OU professor who specializes in human resource management, specifically diversity management and employment of people with disabilities. "Whether it's a parent trying to manage caregiving responsibilities or a person with a disability, we want people to know that support is available."

The event schedule is as follows:

### **Panel discussion (3-4 p.m.)**

Dr. Markel will facilitate a discussion on "Addressing barriers to employment" with a panel of experts: Libbie Ward, Human Resource Business Partner, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan; Dix Geiger, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Michigan Rehabilitation Services; and Rebekah Willis, Director of Enrichment & Community Liaison, Jay Shop, Inc.

### **Breakout sessions (4-5 p.m.)**

- "How to make a lasting impression," presented by the OU Adult Career Counseling Center
- "Applying for jobs in today's world. You've applied, now what?" presented by Tina Mitchell, Career Advisor, Michigan Works!

### **Resume critiquing (4-5:30 p.m.)**

OU Career Services will offer resume critiquing for OU students. OU Human Resource Management students and the OU Adult Career Counseling Center will offer resume critiquing for non-students. Attendees should bring resumes.

### **Resource fair with the following tables (4-5:15 p.m.)**

- OU SEHS Counseling Center/ OU Adult Career Counseling Center
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services
- Disability Student Services
- Jay Shop, Inc.
- OU Career Services
- Michigan Works
- OUCARES
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan



*On Friday, Nov. 10, Oakland University will host an event to help job seekers break down barriers to employment.*

### **Ryan Comins talk (5:15-5:30 p.m.)**

After being diagnosed with autism during childhood, Ryan Comins went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Oakland and now works full time. He participated in Oakland University Center for Autism Outreach Services (OUCARES), which offers programming and support for individuals with autism and their families.

OUCARES Director Kristin Rohrbeck saw Comins' employment potential early on when he was hired as a part-time OUCARES program facilitator teaching computer skills to youth with autism.

"Ryan is an example of a true success story," said Rohrbeck. "He did not let the challenges related to being on the autism spectrum deter him from gaining employment. In fact, he has now maintained full-time employment for over three years."

This event is supported by Oakland's School of Education and Human Services, Center for Autism Outreach Services (OUCARES), Career Services, Disability Support Services, Office of Student Success and Experiential Learning Center and The School of Business Administration.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is not required. For more information, email [studentsuccess@oakland.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@oakland.edu).