

OU Town Hall to highlight research, recognize outstanding investigators

The Research Office at Oakland University will host its first Research, Innovation and Engagement Town Hall from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 8 in Banquet Room B at the Oakland Center.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D., president of Oakland University, will kick off the event with a welcoming message while Dr. James Lentini, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, will underscore the importance of research during his remarks.

"Research is integral to our mission as a university," said Dr. David Stone, professor of health sciences and philosophy, and chief research officer at OU. "The broad purpose of the Town Hall is to recognize that fact by presenting some of the data from our new Annual Research Report, highlighting some of the new Research Office initiatives designed to support faculty and student-based research, and celebrating some of our outstanding investigators with specific awards."

According to Stone, the Annual Research Report will be released each fall beginning this year, detailing sponsored projects and activities for the prior year. The report can be found on the [Research Office](#) website.

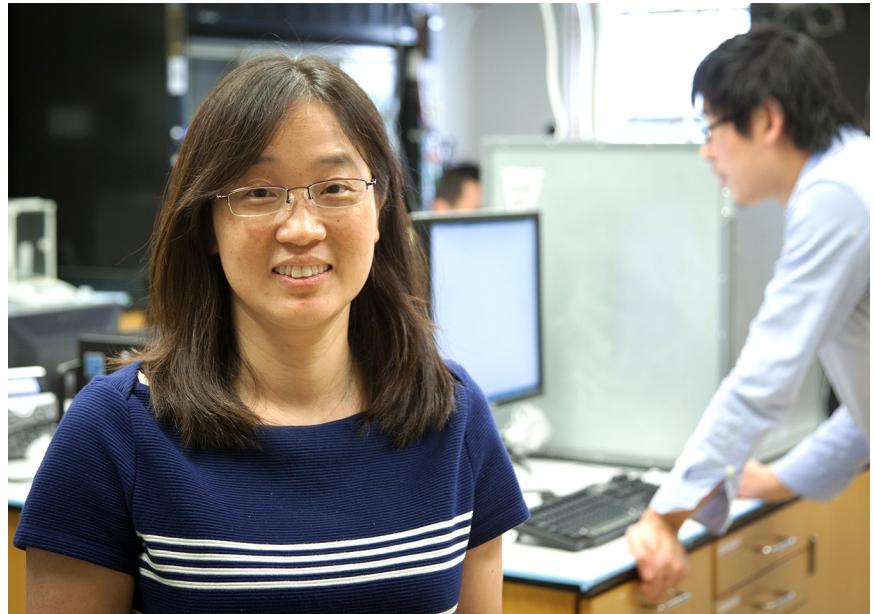
"This report provides information for awards and submissions, and breaks the information down by type (research, instruction, public service), source of funds (federal, state, foundations), by school, by department and by faculty investigators," Stone said. "In some cases, it also provides comparison data from the past year or across a number of years so that we can identify trends. During the Town Hall, I will present highlights from the data."

In addition, Dr. Stone will highlight some of the initiatives he has presented to the Office of the Provost, including: the creation of two Research Development Officer positions; the PI Academy for Research and Engagement; the Advanced Research Methodology Services unit; the expansion of WISE into WISER; the new Rapid Review System for IRB protocols; the creation of the Mobilization Zone; and the launch of Oakland COUNTS!, which will be a web-based matching program that links student and faculty researchers with community agencies in need of research help.

Referring to Oakland COUNTS!, Dr. Stone said, "It's basically eHarmony for research and should provide many opportunities for community-based undergraduate and faculty research

According to Leanne DeVreugd, program assistant for Women in Science, Engineering and Research (WISER) at Oakland University, there will be four "major" awards presented during Town Hall, including:

- **President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz Innovation Award**, which will be presented to Dr. Xiangqun Zeng, professor of Chemistry, for her outstanding patent development activity (7 patents issued, 7 patents pending);
- **Frank Giblin Lifetime Achievement Award**, which will be presented to Dr. Frank Giblin, professor of Biomedical Sciences and director of the Eye Research Institute, for his record 39 years of continuous NIH funding;
- **Researcher of the Year**, which will be presented to Dr. Thomas Raffel, associate professor of Biological Sciences, for largest amount of grant funding in fiscal year 2017 (an NSF CAREER Award totaling \$964,898);



Dr. Xiangqun Zeng, professor of Chemistry at Oakland University, is one of several "outstanding investigators" who will be recognized at the first Research, Innovation and Engagement Town Hall on Nov. 8 at the Oakland Center.

"Unlike the spring awards event, which bases awards on the peer judgment of career-long portfolios of accomplishment, the awards we are presenting are, for the most part, based on annual research data," Stone said.

Other awards that will be presented on Nov. 8 include:

- **Most Active Grant Seeker**, which will be presented to Dr. Xiangqun Zeng, professor of Chemistry, who submitted 9 grant proposals to federal agencies in fiscal year 2017;
- **Outstanding Research Department**, which will be presented to the Biological Sciences Department, for garnering \$2,578,789 in funding;
- **Outstanding Junior Investigator**, which will be presented to Dr. Randal J. Westrick, assistant professor of Biological Sciences, for his NIH and AHA awards totaling \$538,481;
- **Best Team Player**, which will be presented to Dr. Scott M. Pickett, associate professor of Psychology, for his service as Co-PI on a major NIH grant.

According to DeVreugd, OU faculty and staff interested in attending the Town Hall have until Wednesday, Nov. 1 to RSVP to Academic Affairs. To RSVP, [click here](#).