

Friday, Feb 16, 2018

Oakland University President selects Westfall as VP for University Advancement

Oakland University's President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz has announced that Michael J. Westfall has been appointed Vice President for University Advancement, effective March 1, 2018, pending Board approval.

"I am delighted to welcome Michael Westfall to my cabinet to lead fundraising and alumni relations for OU," said Dr. Pescovitz. "This is an exciting time as Michael joins us to take our advancement team to the next level."

Pescovitz continued, "I would like to thank Angie Schmucker for her exceptional contributions to development and alumni relations. After Michael settles into the vice presidency, Angie will become the Associate Vice President for University Advancement."

The search committee was led by Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost James P. Lentini, DMA, and composed of six members of the campus community.

"As we conducted a national search and interviewed highly talented candidates who emerged from the pool, Michael's career experience in academic institution fundraising really stood out to us," said Dr. Lentini. "He has a proven track record of fundraising at both large and small schools and understands what it is going to take to elevate Oakland in both alumni engagement and philanthropic success."

At Oakland, Westfall will lead the university's plans for advancement. Reporting directly to the president and working closely with the provosts and deans and directors, Westfall will hold responsibilities for all aspects of the university's fundraising initiatives. These include the annual fund, major gifts, planned giving, special purpose fundraising and other comprehensive fundraising initiatives. His efforts will include the development of targeted priorities, annual goals, and strategies for fundraising and engagement that will expand the university's visibility and importance among donors.

"My family and I are thrilled to return 'home' to Michigan to join and contribute to the OU community," said Westfall. "I am excited to partner with President Pescovitz to create the vision and strategies for the next campaign effort."

Westfall comes to Oakland after serving for 11 years as Vice President for Advancement and Executive Director of the Foundation at Eastern Washington University, located in Cheney, Washington. At EWU, he led the school's foundation and advancement team of 30 professionals and set several school records in philanthropy. Among his many accomplishments, Westfall oversaw an 80 percent increase in planned giving and grew EWU's endowment value to an all-time high while stewarding investment returns that ranked among the country's best. In addition, the scholarship support to EWU students also reached an all-time high in 2017. Westfall also served in the role of Special Assistant to the President for EWU-Spokane.

Prior to his time at Eastern Washington, Westfall served in fundraising positions of increasing responsibility including at Radford University in Virginia, where he was associate vice president for university advancement and interim foundation executive director, at the University of Toronto in Ontario, Canada where he was director of alumni advancement, and at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia where he was director of annual giving. Westfall also has experience in the areas of alumni relations, foundation management, marketing and athletic department collaborations.

Westfall began his career in development as an athletics annual giving development officer at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. and later as associate director of annual giving programs at Michigan State University. He earned a bachelor's degree in General Studies from Indiana University, Bloomington and did master's degree work in Athletic Administration at Central Michigan University.

He has also held several leadership roles and won numerous awards within the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Westfall has contributed to several articles published in CASE Currents, University Business, Successful Fundraising and the New York Times during his career and been a featured or keynote speaker at several advancement conference meetings over the years.

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Pending Board of Trustees approval, Michael Westfall will join OU as VP for University Advancement on March 1.