



THE PIONEER CLUB **STAY INVOLVED.** CONNECT WITH FORMER COLLEAGUES.

Season's greetings! We hope you are enjoying the holidays with family and friends. We wish you a happy and healthy New Year! Please take a few minutes to peruse the latest [campus news](#) and [calendar of events](#)!

Group Lunches

The group meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. at Nick's Country Oven in Rochester (Adams and Silverbell). These lunches are very casual, so please stop by when your schedule permits.

2015 Year in Review

[Click here](#) to view a special holiday greeting from President Hynd that includes an inspiring review of some of OU's notable accomplishments during the past year.

Campus Update

Governor Rick Snyder announced the appointment of OU alumnus and longtime supporter Robert I. Schostak, of Bloomfield Hills, to the Oakland University Board of Trustees. [Click here](#) to read the full story.

Following an extensive search, OU alumna Dawn Aubry has been named Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Aubry has served in various roles since joining the OU community in 1998. To learn more, [click here](#).

Newsworthy

OU alumni and longtime donors Craig and Ann Stinson recently made an incredibly generous \$5M gift to support student success in the School of Business Administration and the Department of Athletics. [Click here](#) to read more about how the Stinsons created a lasting legacy by funding their passions.

GRIZZ Fact

Did you know that roughly 41% of OU undergraduate students began their educational journey at another institution? [Click here](#) to learn more about transfer student origins. To read archived GRIZZ facts from the Office of Institutional Research, [click here](#).

Pioneer Profile

By Gerry Coon

As an economist and community activist, Retired Distinguished Professor Emeritus Karl Gregory has for a long time been engaged at both the Federal and local level. After serving in the United States Army Artillery and working on his Ph. D., he began teaching economics at Wayne State University and immediately became active in Detroit CORE and in housing desegregation efforts. From that time on he has worked on improving the living, learning, earning and housing conditions for the disadvantaged in his beloved city of Detroit as well as elsewhere.

Karl worked during the administrations of presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Carter and Reagan in advisory and various other positions. He was selected by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to serve on the U.S. Census Bureau's Advisory Committee on the African-American Population, in connection with the 1980 and 2010 decennial censuses, and has been on the board of directors of several financial institutions. He organized and was the first chair of the board

of the First Independence National Bank of Detroit and later served as its interim president.

His work in the civil rights movement caused him to be jailed in Baltimore County in 1963. In 1968, after the civil unrest in Detroit, he advised Reverend Albert Cleage on the plight of the disadvantaged citizens and joined him in meetings with Max Fisher and also with Henry Ford II and William Schoen of Ford Motor Company. In 1972 he helped Reverend Jesse Jackson write An Economic Bill of Rights that informed Jackson's policy advocacy.

Internationally, Karl was a consultant to the NAACP Task Force on Africa, which visited 16 countries before preparing the NAACP Task Force Report on Apartheid given to the U.N. Apartheid committee and was reprinted in the Congressional Record. In 1991 he was a U.N. Senior Economic Advisor in China regarding an export development project.

Up to the time of his retirement from the School of Business Administration in 1996, Karl had received numerous awards, honors, and appointments to Federal, state and local positions. He was also active in many nonprofit organizations involving banking, civil rights, business development and political action in Detroit and Oakland County. He also traveled to 59 countries, several as a consultant, before staying on as a tourist.

So what did retirement bring? More time for consulting, both professional and personal. (Preceding our interview I watched him give a former O.U. acquaintance (Kathy Rush) some quick financial suggestions on her retirement possibilities—no charge. It's what he does!)

For twelve years after his retirement Karl served on the Detroit Work Force Development Board, matching people with jobs and dealing with the hard to employ. At the same time he was active on the board of the Adult Well-Being

Services in Detroit. This non-profit had a \$10 million budget and provided services to senior citizens and the mentally impaired, as well as to a few of their care givers. He was elected for three terms as chairman of this organization. Additionally, he volunteered for twelve years with the Detroit Alliance for Fair Banking (DAFB), to help bank personnel connect with their clients in the city. DAFB's role was to meet with bankers to assure that they were in accordance with the Federal Community Reinvestment Act—promoting diversity among the recipients of business loans, lines of credit and mortgages, as well as fair employment practices and board composition regarding race and gender.

Currently this active retiree is a consultant with a group of ex-employees of WGPR-TV (old channel 62). Together they are preparing a large exhibit for the Detroit Historical Museum celebrating that station's many contributions and innovations, among them 24 hour TV, teen dance and other programming, and numerous training and employment opportunities for African Americans in the television industry. WGPR, the first African-American owned TV station in the nation, was established by Karl's father-in-law, the Reverend Dr. William V. Banks, who bought Grosse Pointe Radio (GPR) and transformed it to WGPR Radio (Where God's Presence Radiates) before he developed the TV station with the same call letters. Tencia Gregory, Reverend Banks' daughter and Karl's wife, ran the station prior to its sale to Channel 62.

The goal of the station was not only to present culture, news and entertainment from an African-American point of view, but also to provide many African-American workers with the skills to enter the production and not only the front but also the back room end of the television industry. Up to that time the only African-Americans in television were mainly those fortunate enough to appear on screen. The display honoring these significant achievements will appear at the Detroit Historical Museum from January 23, 2016, to April. The exhibit will then move to a permanent location on

Jefferson Avenue at the former site of the radio and TV stations. It is hoped that the site will eventually become one of Detroit's major local and tourist destinations.

Karl Gregory and his wife, Tenicia, have three children and two grandchildren. Tenicia loves to live by the ocean in California. Karl visits Atlanta often to be with the grandkids while their mother, Sheila, a Professor of Higher Education Administration at Clark Atlanta University, travels for professional reasons. The eldest daughter, Karen, formerly a social worker in California now lives temporarily with her father in Southfield, while son, Kurt, in the pool-servicing business, currently resides in Florida.

In his spare time, Karl keeps fit by exercising three times a week. He also loves most kinds of music and attends theatre, opera, symphony, jazz and blues performances. He also likes to visit various churches and is currently working on his genealogy and is considering writing his memoirs.

When presented with the Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award by the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, Dr. Gregory said, in part, "...I regard my greatest role as being an activist with a great commitment for community betterment globally, but particularly nationally, and locally." We should all be grateful that he has continued to perform this role well into his retirement years.

Gerry Coon retired from the Reading and Language Arts Department in the School of Education and Human Services. She is a co-editor and writer for the Rochester OPC (Older Persons' Commission) newsletter and a member of the Pioneer Club.

Pioneer Profile is a feature that appears monthly in the Pioneer Club eNewsletter. If you are interested in being profiled or sharing suggestions on

fellow retirees to showcase, please provide your contact information and details to us at oupioneerclub@oakland.edu.

Save the Date

The Pioneer Club will travel to the DIA on Thursday, January 21st. The outing will begin at 9:00 a.m. with a one hour presentation at Meadow Brook Hall given by curator, Madelyn Rzadkowolski. Bus transportation to and from the DIA from Meadow Brook Hall will be provided. Invitations to follow!

Upcoming Events

OU Jazz Band with Joe Locke
Sunday, January 10th, 6:00 p.m.
MotorCity Casino Hotel Sound Board
Tickets \$20

[Click here for more info!](#)

American Song Book Series #4 - Songs of Jimmy Van Heusen
Saturday, January 16th, 2:00 p.m.
Varner Lab Theatre
Free admission

[Click here for more info!](#)

Shanghai Quartet with David Small, Baritone CMSD at OU
Sunday, January 17th, 3:00 p.m.
Varner Recital Hall
Tickets \$30

[Click here for more info!](#)

Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Ceremony
Keynote Speaker: LeVar Burton
Monday, January 18th, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Banquet Rooms, Oakland Center

Doors open at 10:30 a.m. No tickets required. Seating is on a first-come basis.

[Click here for more info!](#)

The DDA Concert: Detroit Dance Artists Showcase

Saturday, January 23rd, 2:00 p.m.

Varner Lab Theatre

All seats \$8

[Click here for more info!](#)

Faculty Collaborative Chamber Music Concert

Sunday, January 24th, 3:00 p.m.

Varner Recital Hall

Tickets \$14

[Click here for more info!](#)

About the Pioneer Club

The purpose of the Oakland University Pioneer Club is to provide social and educational opportunities to OU retirees and their spouses. It is our hope that this group will serve as a way for you to reconnect with former colleagues as well as maintain a relationship with OU. As a retiree, you remain a valued member of the University community.