

Taking the Initiative

The Oakland University

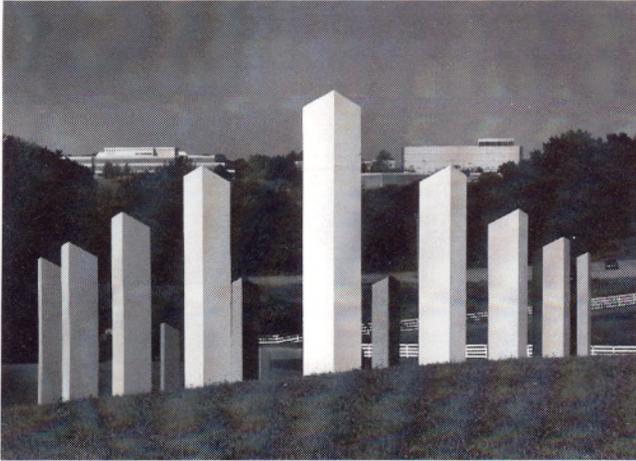
Strategic Plan 1995-2005 in action

1995-1996

As the millennium approaches, Oakland University makes its 'strategic' move

The Oakland University Strategic Plan 1995-2005, 24 months in the making, now moves into its implementation phase.

Designed to position Oakland for the 21st century and beyond, the plan outlines nine significant strategies.



The ultimate goal of the plan is to further Oakland's recognition and reputation as an institution of excellence and to achieve national eminence in distinct areas of teaching, learning, research and services.

Strategy 1

Oakland University views undergraduate education as central to its mission and will ensure an environment of learning excellence in order to educate a diverse body of students to be productive, contributing members of society.

Strategy 2

To sustain Oakland's reputation of overall excellence in selected areas of graduate and professional education, resources will be focused on creating and strengthening

areas of graduate study in a manner that is responsive to regional and national needs.

Strategy 3

To promote the recruitment, retention and success of its students, Oakland will provide an environment rich in human diversity, with dedicated support services, extensive non-classroom activities and outstanding instructional, residential and recreational sport facilities.

Strategy 4

Research, scholarship and creative activities are among Oakland's greatest strengths and will be aggressively encouraged and supported.

Strategy 5

Oakland views community outreach as an integral component of its activities, and will expand its efforts to serve the community consistent with the university's mission and vision.

Strategy 6

Oakland will develop and support areas of institutional excellence and distinction that contribute to national eminence.

Strategy 7

Oakland will create an empowered community of diverse, unified, committed and motivated employees who focus their collective skills, talents and knowledge toward realization of the university's mission and vision.

Strategy 8

Oakland believes that continuous planning and evaluation are needed to effectively chart the future of the university, and, therefore, Oakland will increase its self-assessment activity.

Strategy 9

Oakland will secure, allocate or redirect human, physical and financial resources in a manner that enhances the university's mission and vision.

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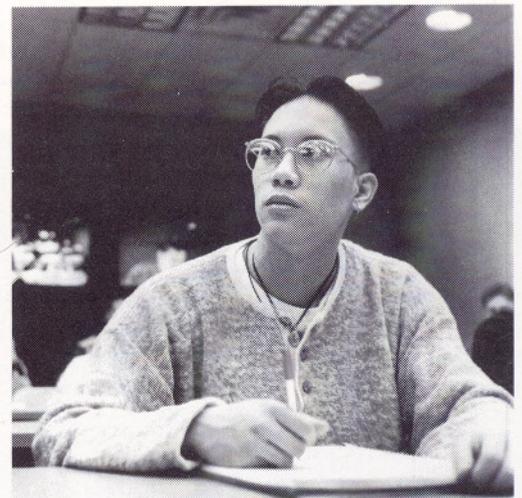
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University Senate budget presentation

Key elements of Interim President Gary D. Russi's budget presentation to the University Senate on November 16, 1995.

Science & Engineering Building Animal Care Facility & Hannah Hall

Sources	
— 1993-94 Transfer	\$ 650,000
— 1994-95 Transfer	1,000,000
— Bid Efficiency-State	1,700,000
— OU Foundation	500,000
	\$3,850,000
Demand	
— Animal Care Facility	\$3,200,000
— Hannah Hall Renovation	1,200,000
— Equipment	500,000
	\$4,900,000
Outstanding	
— Fund Raising	\$1,100,000

Science & Engineering Building Equipment Budget

	Current	Proposed
Health Science	\$306,000	\$306,000
Biology	431,000	431,000
Chemistry	431,000	431,000
Math	144,000	144,000
Physics	431,000	431,000
Engineering	106,000	106,000
Computer Labs	297,000	297,000
Office Furniture	186,000	186,000
Class/Conference Rooms	27,000	27,000
Miscellaneous	63,000	63,000
Unallocated Reserve (Project, Bid, Lapse)	578,000	1,778,000
TOTAL PROJECT	\$3,000,000	\$4,200,000

1995-96 Budget Special Features

Strategic Plan Fund	\$ 400,000
Strategic Marketing	200,000
Governmental Affairs	150,000
Technology Improvement	500,000
Classroom Equipment	50,000
Equipment Loan Fund	150,000
Financial Aid	176,000
Deferred Maintenance	100,000
OU Foundation	1,706,900
Spring/Summer Incentive Program	106,000
Indirect Cost Recovery Incentive	289,880
Off-Campus Degree Program Incentive	X
Academic Year Salary in Grants	X
College/School Fund Raising Liaisons	X

1995-96 Budget Oakland University Foundation Support

Honors College	\$ 347,000
MICAR	150,000
Externally Directed Programs	100,000
Equipment Replacement	25,000
Supplemental Instruction	1,900
Parent Phone Line	2,000
Int'l Orientation Program	3,700
Process Redesign	10,000
Math Instruction	1,500
Computational Facilities	4,800
Russian Program	20,000
SBA Faculty Mentorship	10,000
Admissions/Skills Center	531,000
Animal Care Facility	500,000
TOTAL	\$1,706,900

Students, faculty, staff rated top notch

U.S. News & World Report rates Oakland University 23rd in academic reputation among the top 122 Midwestern regional colleges and universities for 1996. According to Interim President Gary D. Russi, human resources — students, faculty and staff — contribute much to Oakland's momentum and progress.

Quality students

Oakland's student body continues to grow. In 1995, 7,395 full-time students and 6,205 part-time students — a combined 13,600 students — called Oakland their academic home. The majority (10,769) were undergraduates, although the graduate school boasts a healthy 2,831 student body.

"Growth has occurred at both the undergraduate and graduate levels," Russi said. "In 1990, we had about 2,200 master's students; this year we have about 2,700."

Average ACT scores (21 compared to 18-19 nationally) and grade-point averages (3.1 average) of entering freshmen also attest to Oakland's demand for quality students.

"We do indeed have a quality student body," Russi said. "This is indicated by both numbers and the profile they bring to us."

Current and former Oakland students also represent the university well in the community, as attested by others who commented via audio tape throughout Russi's presentation.

Quality faculty

Oakland's faculty members are considered fine educators.

Russi noted that Oakland faculty degrees, by Carnegie classification, come from the top universities in the nation. "We continue to recruit from those universities and hire quality faculty."

Judging from OU's 1995-96 full-time new faculty members, this tradition will continue. Ten new faculty members joined Oakland's ranks in 1995, and searches have been approved for even more faculty in 1996.

Quality staff

Oakland currently employs more than 1,500 full- and part-time staff members. More importantly, faculty and staff who participated in "Strategic Plan 1995-2005" development activities rated Oakland's staff as one of its strengths.

"We have a great staff," Russi said.

Diversity

In terms of cultural diversity and staffing, Oakland is making strides. Oakland's commitment to diversity includes employing a consulting firm from Chicago to help ensure cultural diversity in faculty/staff hiring and modifying the faculty/staff search process.

"We have a fully configured Office of Equity," Russi said. "It offers a number of programs to diversify our campus. One of the major areas we have an interest in to help us diversify is to modify the affirmative action plan. This plan was written in 1988-89 and is in severe need of upgrading. We've hired a consultant to help us do that — we have a draft before us and will soon put together an affirmative action implementation plan."



Interim President Gary D. Russi focused on the theme of "Quality, Quality, Quality" during a state-of-the-university presentation in January.

The Honors College gets a fresh look

Next September, look for an old face in a new place. That's when the Honors College, currently housed in two offices and a conference room on the second floor of Varner Hall, is slated to move into East Vandenberg Hall.

In addition to expanded office space, a multi-purpose conference/study room and computer laboratory are planned for the new Honors College facility, to be named after longtime Oakland University benefactor Dr. Alvin Larson, who died in

surface — glass — to make the most of the existing 1,100 square feet.

The space currently functions as the hall director's apartment, which will be relocated to the second floor of East Vandenberg. A 700-square-foot addition, where the present patio is, will be included as well.

"The building is unique because it houses academic departments and offices, classrooms and residential services," says Jean Ann Miller, assistant director, Student Development, Residence

Halls. "It's very multi-purpose."

Murphy met with William Connellan, associate vice president, Academic Affairs; Khaless Dahr, senior architect, Capital Planning and Design; Miller; and two representatives from the architectural firm of Straub Pettitt Yaste, Troy, to establish space programming for the project.

"The firm has already submitted a preliminary space program and program analysis summaries for Oakland's review and approval,"

Dahr says. "The

next step of the design process is the schematic design phase — a preliminary layout that shows basic space relationships."

Murphy described his vision for the new facility as something brilliant and modern. "We need a whole new look," he says.

The Honors College's space and design needs fit its new role as a "universitywide program." Once housed within the College of Arts and Sciences, the Honors College will be its own academic unit. "We're not only moving physically, we've moved structurally," Murphy says.

Founded in the mid-'70s "for highly motivated students seeking an unusually

challenging education," the Honors College now numbers 200 students. A rotating appointed faculty teaches an eclectic repertoire of courses (one senior colloquium and seven core) per year; 1995-96 titles range from *Somewhat of Love, Somewhat of Lust: The Genesis and Development of Courtly Love from Medieval to Modern* (taught by Associate Professor of Rhetoric Margaret B. Pigott) to *Fuzzy Logic* (taught by Engineering Professor Richard E. Haskell).

In addition, students take two years of foreign language, have an advanced-standing interview and do an independent project.

Typically, Honors College students fall into two categories — "those who fall into categories...and those who do not," Murphy says.

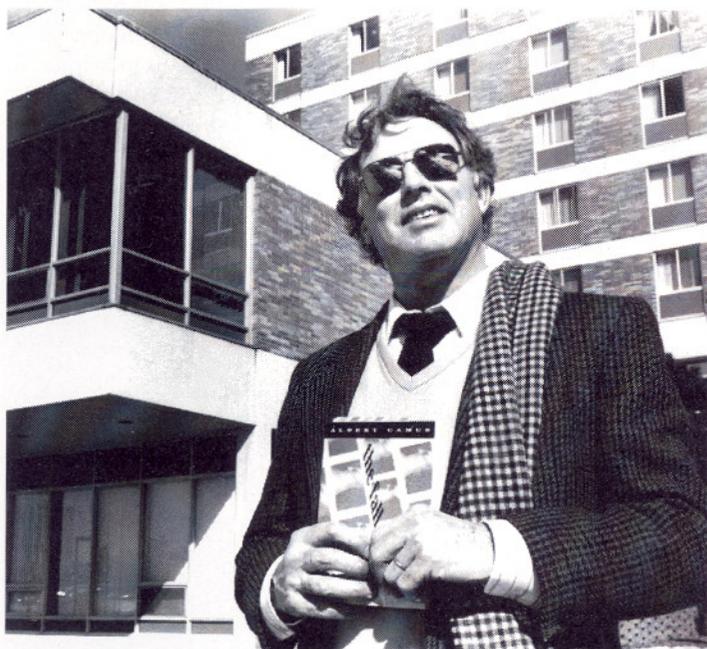
Student roundtables, on such intellect-expanding topics as *Does God Exist?*, are offered throughout the year, as are Honors College-sponsored programs with diverse themes. Professor Phyllis Rooney and friends read works by 1995 Nobel Prize-winner Seamus Heaney, an Irish poet.

Murphy, associate professor of English and author of *Reader's Guide to C.S. Lewis* and *The Enigma Variations*, also envisions 1996 programming related to the theme "Detroit."

"We intend to do more in the way of programs and events for the university," Murphy says. "We're very interested in anything we can do to keep vital the intellectual life of the university."

Although not an academic rarity, the Honors College does give Oakland a certain distinction. About 30 percent of America's colleges and universities belong to the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), according to NCHC executive secretary/treasurer William P. Mech, and Oakland is one of them.

"The Honors College is important both as itself and as a symbol of the university and what we think academic excellence and commitment to students are all about," Murphy says. "The new facility will be a highly visible reminder of that."



Brian Murphy, director, Honors College, stands in front of Vandenberg Hall, site of the new Honors College facility.

October 1994. Construction is slated to begin this spring.

A \$347,000 grant from the Oakland University Foundation makes the move possible.

Honors College member Justin Purcell, a junior majoring in electrical engineering, approves.

"It will be particularly nice for those living on campus," he says.

The new facility will be on the ground floor of East Vandenberg Hall facing Beer Lake. Brian Murphy, director of the college, hopes to use another shimmering

Renovations and innovations are signs of good health

A new home for the Honors College. Improved space for the Office of Admissions and the Academic Skills Center. A modernized modern languages laboratory. And there's more to come.

"This year we submitted to the state our priorities for capital development," Interim President Gary D. Russi said. "We put together a package that included a new classroom/School of Business Administration building. The governor's capital outlay budget now supports the request. We desperately need classrooms and have been communicating that as vigorously as we can. The message seems to have gotten through.

"The state is interested in partnerships — in a 20- to 25- percent match for any new building. The proposed \$16-million building necessitates that we bring forth a match, which could be generated in a variety of ways. We are optimistic."

Another welcome campus improvement relates to parking. The parking expansion project, slated to add 1,000 spaces, will occur in two phases over the next couple of years, Russi said.

Other improvements already under way or in progress at Oakland include:



The new Science and Engineering Complex is under construction.

- Campus Facility & Operations Building — in use.
- Campus signage — under way.
- Electronic classroom — in use in O'Dowd Hall.
- Entryway — upgraded — further improvements to come.
- Nursing Learning Resource Laboratory — upgraded.
- Placement & Career Services — upgraded.

- Residence halls — East Vandenberg renovated; West Vandenberg to be renovated this summer.
- Science & Engineering Complex — in progress.
- Recreation and Athletic Center — in progress.

"It took the campus about 10 years to get funding for the Science and Engineering Complex," Russi said. "The budget was put together in the late '80s and, as a result, when it was billed, it was over budget. Some major components of the projects had to be dropped, and a key component had to be scaled down. Because there was not enough funding from the state for the entire project, the Animal Care Facility was removed, which would severely compromise our ability to do research in biomedical science. Another element was the Hannah Hall renovation, which was dedicated to moving the School of Health Sciences out of Vandenberg Hall and closer to the sciences. A third item under stress was the equipment budget. We've made great strides dealing with all three of these."

According to Russi, the Hannah Hall Renovation and the Animal Care Facility are back in the project, and the equipment budget has been enriched by \$1.2 million. Combined with the current allocation of \$3 million, the equipment budget is now \$4.2 million, as compared to the 1988-89 request for \$5 million. In addition, the equipment money will be leveraged as match money to move the equipment budget closer to the original request.

"Another way to enrich our campus is to allocate resources," Russi said referring

to special features of the 1995-96 budget. "The Strategic Plan Fund of \$400,000 was used to support projects submitted by faculty. Three projects were supported: establishment of the Center for Biomedical Research, strategic positioning of the Eye Research Institute and provision for a new instructional laboratory in the School of Engineering and Computer Science."

Other special features include strategic marketing, targeted to do market research

and add needed visibility to Oakland's campus; governmental affairs, established to provide a liaison between the university and state; and technology improvement, used to wire campus buildings to give faculty, staff and students network access; and classroom renovation.

A model of the American university in the 21st century

Today's students want "best buys" — and Oakland University has been called one.

Academically speaking, Oakland stands out. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has accredited all of Oakland's academic programs and called it "a model of the American university in the 21st century."

Most recently, the School of Nursing received accreditation from the National League for Nursing and the Lowry Early Childhood Center, an arm of the School of Education and Human Services, from the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, respectively.

Additionally, numerous academic enhancements occurred in 1995 or are in the planning stage.

According to Russi, "temperature taking," which is essential for Oakland to maintain its strong position in the academic arena — is taking the following forms:

Assessment

The University Senate has organized an assessment program and committee to determine if Oakland is meeting its academic programming goals. The new Office of Institutional Research and Assessment further supports this effort.

Process Redesign

Individuals and teams are working on specific projects designed to improve efficiency and streamline processes throughout the university.

Total Quality Management (TQM)

The School of Business Administration is applying TQM to its problem-solving endeavors.

Michigan Quality Council

Initially organized and funded by Gov. John Engler, this council, supported by leaders in both industry and education, now calls Oakland home.

New environment awaits Admissions/ Academic Skills Center

Recruitment. Retention. Renovation. All three begin with "r" and share something else in common. "They share everything," say committee members for the renovation of the Office of Admissions, the Academic Skills Center and Pre-College Programs.

Recruitment

More than 4,700 potential students and their families visit admissions annually. Many eventually join Oakland's student body, which numbers 13,600. In addition, Pre-College Programs bring more than 1,200 multicultural students to Oakland each year, many of who eventually enroll.

Retention

The Academic Skills Center serves more than 2,500 students yearly, providing tutoring, specialized academic support programs and university- and state-funded intervention programs.

Renovation

Admissions and the Learning Resources Center have received a \$531,000 grant from the Oakland University Foundation for renovation of their adjoining space in North Foundation Hall. Oakland will complete the renovation in September 1996.

The Troy architectural firm of Straub Pettitt Yaste will create a new design for the estimated 8,000 square-foot area.

"The flooring, ceiling, lighting and partitions will all be new and the heating and ventilation will be modified," says Khaled Dahr, senior architect, Capital Planning and Design. "The space layout will support the various department functions."

Committee members reviewed Straub Pettitt Yaste's proposed schematic design and provided comments. Committee

members include Jeanne M. Carter, director, Academic Skills Center; William Headley, assistant director, Admissions; Lynn R. Hockenberger, director, Learning Resources; and Robert Johnson, associate vice president, Enrollment Management and director, Admissions. When the design is complete, the committee will submit the project for construction bids.

Headley notes that Admissions and the Academic Skills Center and Pre-College Program area will keep their separate lobbies but share a linked conference room. Functions such as admissions advising, application processing, computer teleconferencing, tutoring, counseling and testing will have designated space.

"Our area will be much more accommodating to prospective students," Headley says. "We will have much more space for tours. At present, if we have a large group gathering for a tour, it feels pretty cramped. Another problem is that our furnishings were gathered over time — and not from the same time. We have a rather eclectic look now. That will change as well."

Renovations will also include open-landscape furniture. Committee members say they expect the new look to provide prospective students with a strong first impression of Oakland and students seeking academic assistance with a more positive environment for improvement.

"Our services are growing as the student population grows," Carter says. "We need additional small-tutoring rooms, as well as a large open area to accommodate the different tutoring formats. We will use the small rooms as alternative testing sites for students with special needs."

Fast facts

- According to ACT reports, Oakland's primary competitors are the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Michigan State University, Central Michigan University, Wayne State University and Western Michigan University.
- The Office of Institutional Research notes that one-third of Oakland's entering FTIAC (first time in any college) expect they will need academic support in mathematics and study skills. More than 20 percent expect to need help in writing.
- William Headley, assistant director, Admissions, reports that his office currently processes more than 10,000 undergraduate applications per year.

New enrollment management strategy transforms the way OU delivers student services

With student enrollment at an all-time high and a well-mapped strategic plan in hand, Oakland University is investing in an aggressive marketing approach to recruitment.

Known as enrollment management, Oakland is among a growing number of leading colleges and universities who utilize private-sector marketing principles in higher education.

This innovative marketing strategy, in an effort to combat the dwindling number of college-bound students in the post-Baby Boom age, puts emphasis on such techniques as direct mail and market research and incorporates virtually all university areas, combining recruitment with marketing and retention efforts.

Enter Robert Johnson, Oakland University's new associate vice president for Admissions and Enrollment Management. Johnson, the former executive director, Enrollment Management, Central State University (CSU), Wilberforce, Ohio, has enjoyed success with the new national educational reform movement.

"We have been practicing it since the early '90s and our enrollment has been mostly up," says Shay Hope, acting director, Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management, CSU.

With Oakland's enrollment at an all-time high, Johnson believes the university is well positioned to compete for top students.

"A true enrollment manager is a change agent," Johnson says. "To recruit and retain students, you must work collaboratively with all areas of the university to ensure a high level of student satisfaction. Enrollment management is everyone's business. It's centralizing instead of de-centralizing our retention efforts.

"Oakland has a good product, but we have to keep up the level of service in all areas. We have to compete, just like IBM and Apple compete for market share.

There are only a limited number of students, and the environment is survival of the fittest. We need to be more user-friendly and help keep our students as satisfied customers."

Johnson says he wants to reach a point where OU can "micro-market" specific academic departments. For example, OU could look at the Marketing Department in the School of Business Administration and determine how many students the department wants or needs, then market for that number of marketing majors.

Johnson says the first step to increase OU's retention effort is to gather market research. He is actively involved in a market research study with the University Communications and Marketing Department to learn exactly who Oakland's "market" is, why students come to Oakland, succeed and graduate, why some students don't choose Oakland and why some students choose OU and then leave.

Preliminary reports will be available in late spring.

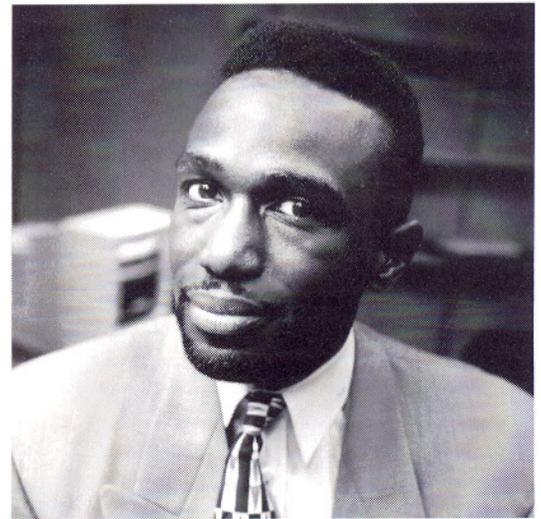
"Market research will help us get a good understanding and assessment of our market, then we'll have some data to work with," Johnson says. "The research will not only help us with our primary markets, but also with our secondary markets where we don't traditionally get students, but where there may be some good opportunities for us."

Though no university can be all things to all students, Johnson says Oakland needs to understand its opportunities and related costs. "We also want to broaden the composition of our student body," he says. "And helpful information will come out of the market research that will help us market to students of diverse backgrounds."

The other side of enrollment management is student retention. What services should Oakland offer? And what steps should it take to keep them?

"There are a lot of departments working on various retention programs, but I want to pull them all together and make it a universitywide collaboration so that we are doing all the right things with no duplication of effort," Johnson says.

Making Oakland more visible to the public is another important aspect of enrollment management.



Oakland's new associate vice president for Admissions and Enrollment Management is Robert Johnson.

"Oakland University must position itself in the marketplace so that the community views the institution as a vital resource — that has to be key to our marketing strategy," Johnson says. "If the community views us as a valuable resource and worthy of support it has a circular effect, and one feeds off the other; money for a new building, more classrooms and equipment, and enrollment growth.

Oakland's new international orientation program helps students adjust to the university and the community.

Like a compass, Oakland University's new international orientation program points foreign students in the right direction — academically and socially.

The four-day program, held in August, introduced 20 full-time students (F-1) and exchange visitors (J-1) to Oakland and the surrounding community.

The program, made possible by a \$3,700 grant from the Oakland University Foundation, helps promote the retention and success of these students, thus enriching Oakland's diversity. About 140 F-1 students and 11 J-1 exchange visitors representing 37 different countries currently attend Oakland.

The United States Information Agency, which oversees the J-1 visitor exchange program, requires such a program and Immigration and Naturalization Services, which monitors F-1 students, encourages one.

"There was no real orientation program before this," says Lisa E. McGill, director, Office of International Students and Scholars. "There was a brief meeting that lasted a few hours, which seemed inadequate for new international students. They have to deal with everything from adjusting to our country, language and culture to getting registered, from going to Social

Security to learning how to shop in our supermarkets."

Day one of the program consisted of a general welcome to the United States and the university; day two, orientation to the academic community; day three, orientation to the general community; and day four, orientation to university policy and immigration law.

During the program, guest speakers who have lived abroad shared their own personal experiences with the international students. Speakers included Bhushan L. Bhatt, associate dean, Engineering and Computer Science; Vincent B. Khapoya, chairperson and professor, Political Science; and Sharon P. Muir, professor, Education.

"I've taught here for more than 20 years and understand some of the challenges they face," says Khapoya, who attended Oregon State University as an international student from Kenya in the mid-'60s. "I told them what the American academic culture is like and how to relate

to teachers. In most other cultures, there are no student rights or programs to help students achieve. Most of the students who get into college are considered the 'cream of the crop' and expected to know how to get along."

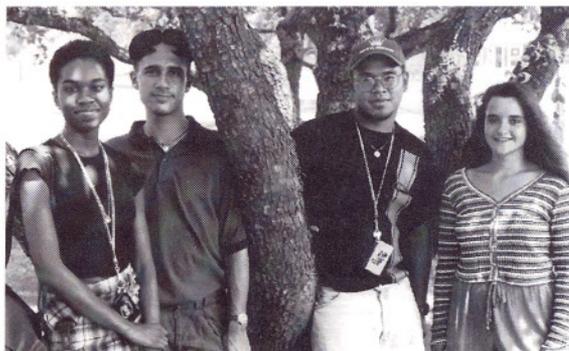
Although the new program was designed for newly admitted international students — some of whom arrived on campus just the night before — McGill was pleased to note

that previously enrolled international students benefited from it as well.

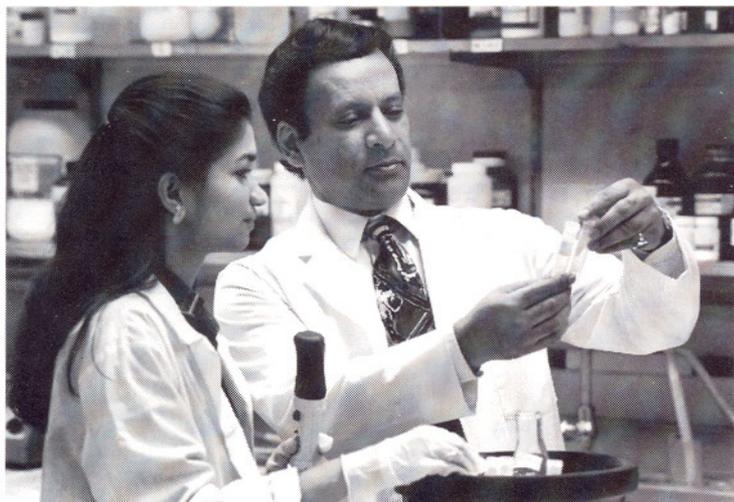
"The network of international students on campus is strong and when some of the students heard about the program, they came, too," she says. "They later told me what a good program it was; they wished they'd had such a program."

McGill says international students are good at providing such feedback — feedback that was used to help plan the one-day, international orientation program in January.

"The feedback from the students had a common theme," she says. "They feel welcome here. And that fits with the theme of the international orientation program and that is to help them become adjusted to the university and the community."



About 140 full-time students and 11 exchange visitors representing 37 different countries currently attend Oakland.



Oakland University's new international orientation program points foreign students in the right direction — academically and socially.

At Oakland, undergraduate student research is more than a valued tradition

Bucking the national trend at most colleges and universities, Oakland University undergraduates have the opportunity to “roll up their sleeves and discover the joys and tribulations of research,” says Chemistry Professor Denis M. Callewaert.

Undergraduate research opportunities range from grants awarded annually by the Oakland University Alumni Association (OUAA) to collaborative student/faculty presentations and papers.

“Undergraduate research is a long-standing tradition at Oakland University,” says Donald A. McCrimmon, director, Grants, Contracts and Sponsored Research. “We have a faculty that understands this tradition and we recruit new faculty who understand it as well.”

Natural science in action

The University Research Committee selects recipients of OUAA undergraduate student research grants, limited to \$300 each. Yee H. Do, the 1996 recipient, is working with Callewaert on Cytotoxic Function of Isolated Human Lymphocyte Populations.

“Yee has already participated in studies that have characterized a unique type of human lymphocyte — natural T cells,” Callewaert says. “Results of some of his work were presented at the 9th International Congress of Immunology in San Francisco last July.

“In my field, tumor immunology, undergraduate researchers are especially rare,” Callewaert says. “Yee and others who are contemplating medical research have a fantastic opportunity to find out what it’s like at a fairly early stage in their careers.”

The Department of Chemistry also awards several Thompson scholarships each semester to encourage students to pursue research careers. Each scholarship provides tuition and fees for one to two credits of CHM 290.

At Oakland’s 20th Conference of Student Research in the Biological Sciences March 20, three undergraduate students, their presentations and their advisers included: Nidhi Khattree, Estradiol Regulation of p53 Tumor Suppressor Protein in Human Breast Cancer Cells, Virinder K. Moudgil, adviser; Melanie

Radomski, Effect of Predators on the Spatial Affinity and Activity of Wood Frog Larvae, Keith A. Berven, adviser; and Mary Whiteher, Distribution of Fibroblast Growth Factor Receptors (FGF-Rs); During Vasculogenesis and Angiogenesis in Neo-natal Retina, Feona M. Hansen-Smith, adviser.

“The undergraduate research involvement in the Department of Biological Sciences is a major contributing factor in Oakland’s strength in biomedical sciences,” says Virinder K. Moudgil, department chair.

“Department faculty and students have received national prominence for their research in organismic and cellular/molecular biology.

“Undergraduates work closely with faculty advisers as partners in research activities ranging from peer-reviewed publications, generating internal and external research grant awards to presenting the work at national and international research conferences.”

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which invited Oakland as one of 200 institutions out of 1,200 eligible to apply for a major research grant, recently recognized the department’s accomplishments.

“By conducting research early in their careers, students can acquire laboratory experience which will position them to gain acceptance to prominent graduate or medical schools or to obtain employment in industry,” says Biomedical Sciences Professor Frank J. Giblin, a member of Oakland’s Eye Research Institute (ERI).

Research diversity

“We’ve taken the lead from the sciences in terms of publishing with students,” says John B. Cameron, professor, Art and Art History, who has worked with numerous undergraduates over the years.

Cameron and wife Janice G. Schimmelman, chair, Art History, and 20 art history students inventoried southeastern Michigan architecture for the Michigan Historical Division in 1980-85. Joyce Heymes ’83 and Lynn Workman ’85 served as principal undergraduates on the \$150,000 project. John Bantel ’85 and Wesley Hanks ’87 helped prepare an index to History of Oakland County, Michigan, by Samuel W. Durant and H.B. Pierce.

Such research pays off.

“Many students working in my laboratory throughout the past decade have had the opportunity to present their research at national or international conferences,” says Robert B. Stewart Jr., associate professor, Psychology.

“Involvement in such research provides students the opportunity to see science in action. I know my students have made an important transition when they express the sentiment that class demands get in the way of research requirements.”

Undergraduate research abounds at Oakland in many other diverse areas as well, such as education, engineering

and liberal arts. Fittingly, the university is the site for “Meeting of the Minds IV,” a showcase for undergraduate research and student-faculty collaborations, to be held May 17 in the Oakland Center. The event is jointly sponsored by Oakland, University of Michigan-Dearborn and University of Michigan-Flint.

“In the classroom we can teach others what we learned in the lab,” says Stewart, “and in the laboratory we can really learn those lessons we thought we understood back in the classroom. It’s a circular rather than a linear process.”

“The spontaneous smile or cheer from a student who just discovered that he or she has made a breakthrough in a research endeavor is a sign of education at its best,” says Ka C. Cheok, associate professor, Engineering.



Yee H. Do, recipient of the 1996 OUAA Undergraduate Student Research Grant, is a biochemistry major.

University offers important life lessons outside the classroom walls

Like the Energizer bunny, Kelly Schehr keeps going and going.

Schehr, a senior psychology major, is one of two recipients of this year's "Keeper of the Dream" award, chair of the Student Program Board and Alpha Delta Pi member.

As a campus leader — a student who gets involved with the university outside the classroom — Schehr's resume is growing by the minute. It lists experiences and accomplishments that would make any job recruiter smile.

"I've been to all kinds of leadership seminars and retreats," she says. "Oakland offers a lot of leadership opportunities for students. You just don't get these types of opportunities at other universities."

Fostering student leadership is a major mission of the Division of Student Affairs, says Mary Beth Snyder, vice president.

"Part of our job is to help students connect with each other and the university," Snyder says. "Developing their leadership competencies adds to what students learn in the classroom. It makes them better prepared and gives them some practice for when they are out in the world running businesses or working in school systems, hospitals, you name it."

Snyder says students work or are involved in virtually every aspect of the university, and "we try to adapt our work with every new class that comes in."

Student leadership development will continue to be a priority at Oakland, Snyder says. The university is continuing its long-running programs, such as ExplORations — a leadership and skills training workshop, which celebrates its 20th year next fall. A number of new programs are under development or under way. A sampling:

- A Winter Weekend Retreat for those involved in Oakland's more than 80 student organizations. In January, 44 student leaders attended the third annual event.
- The first Greek Retreat, for the university's 14 Greek organizations held in March.

- A Student Leader Training Day, slated for June 18, will bring together student leaders from across campus — from orientation group leaders to peer advisers and resident hall assistants — for joint training and information on a variety of topics.
- A Seasoned Leader Institute is planned for the fall to give previous student leaders advanced leadership skills and training. In conjunction with the institute, a mentoring program will give experienced students and graduates an opportunity to share the skills they have gained and discuss how their leadership experiences have helped them in their careers.
- A "Program to Go" series is also planned for the fall. Pre-packaged talks on a variety of subjects, from effective meetings to delegation, will be available for students.

"Once you are an established leader at Oakland, new doors open for you," Schehr says. "My experiences have given me a lot of direction and helped me mature. I don't think I'd be the same person if I had not been involved on campus."



Kelly Schehr is one of two recipients of the 1995 "Keeper of the Dream" award, chair of the Student Program Board, co-chair and co-founder of OU's first WOCO, and member, Alpha Delta Pi.

Faculty mentors aid SBA retention effort

Problems and solutions. Every business entity has them — the School of Business Administration (SBA) included. Realizing that only 45 percent of its incoming freshman pre-business majors graduate from Oakland University, the SBA recently instituted a faculty mentorship program.

Bolstered by a \$10,000 grant from the Oakland University Foundation, the faculty mentorship program is designed to boost the school's freshman and transfer retention rate.

Kathleen G. (Katie) Kazarian, coordinator, Academic Advising, says the program is most beneficial in that "the first and second semesters are most critical for retention, yet our faculty don't see these students until their sophomore year." Kazarian adds that 40 out of 50 the incoming SBA freshmen contacted during winter '96 orientations said they wanted a mentor.

"We developed a mentoring resource guide last summer (*Mentoring: In Pursuit of Success*) that can be easily updated," Kazarian says. "We explain the program to students during orientations and then we run a list of the newly admitted students for fall and winter semesters and assign them to the faculty."

Faculty mentors first meet prospective mentees at a reception held each fall and winter semester. All incoming SBA freshman and transfer students were invited to the winter '96 reception, held in January. As of fall 1995, approximately 150 Oakland students classified as incoming SBA freshmen.

"We talked about Oakland, careers, the School of Business Administration, what to expect and what other students were thinking and doing and how that related to what she was thinking and doing," explains David P. Doane, professor, Quantitative Methods, mentor to freshman Kimberly Culyba.

"He was enthusiastic about it and that made me enthusiastic about it," Culyba says. "Katie Kazarian was also very helpful. Their overall attitude was very positive. I see Dr. Doane every so often in passing and if I ever have any questions, I feel comfortable going up to him and asking them."

Five to six mentees were assigned to faculty mentors during the fall semester, and faculty will pick up additional mentees this semester as well. Mentors are encouraged to meet with mentees for informal question-and-answer sessions; show them around the SBA and the Kresge Library; and attend lectures, sporting or cultural events with them.

The business fraternity Alpha Kappa Psi serves as a liaison between faculty mentors and new students, serving as "big brothers and sisters."

"It's a win-win situation for everyone," says Miron Stano, professor, Economics and Management, who facilitated the collaboration between the business fraternity and the program. "The new students get contact with faculty and Alpha Kappa Psi, Alpha Kappa Psi members get experience in a mentor-type situation and the process gets more word-of-mouth exposure, which benefits both the school and the university."

"Eighteen faculty have volunteered to work with Alpha Kappa Psi to contact students and help ease them into it. Freshmen are a bit intimidated by faculty and are thus hesitant to take the initiative."

According to John E. Tower, associate professor, Management Information

Systems, research shows that connection to faculty is the No. 1 way of retaining students, followed by student involvement in activities.

In addition to the faculty mentorship program, the SBA is developing a new course, MIS 200, to introduce new students to issues related to their majors early on. In conjunction with the mentoring, this should also help improve retention.



Accounting Associate Professor Barbara Theisen, center, talks with a freshman student and her father during a mentoring seminar at the Oakland Center in January.

Tower says that a number of universities have successfully implemented faculty mentorship programs, but that meaningful cultural change takes time. In the meantime, "It's like that old saying that ministers have," he notes. "If you can save one student, it's worth it."

Math and Journalism team up to share computer resources

Christy Grove applauds Oakland University's efforts to update computer equipment in 207 O'Dowd.

"The old ones were slow," she says. "The new ones are quite helpful."

Groves, who is taking a feature writing class in 207 O'Dowd, is an English major with a journalism minor. She is typical of students who use the new state-of-the-art laboratory.

"I've used older computers at OU and these are a considerable step up," says classmate Phil Stayhue, a history major with a journalism minor.

Thanks to the new computers, students studying calculus and statistics are sharing the same laboratory with journalism students learning newswriting and newspaper editing.

The math/journalism computer laboratory partnership is a collaboration made possible through a \$65,000 grant underwritten by a portion of the proceeds collected from student course fees. The facility

boasts 18 PC PowerMacs, new software and a laser printer.

The laboratory sharing is one example of how Oakland is redirecting resources to enhance the university's mission and vision, says Dave Downing, dean, College

of Arts and Sciences.

"We combined the computer laboratory to serve the needs of both departments and their students," Downing says. "We are always looking at ways to use our resources in the most efficient way possible."

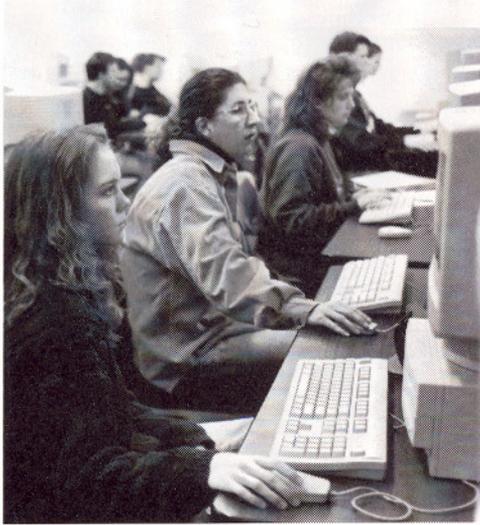
The Journalism Department uses the facility for six

journalism classes and additional computer laboratory hours for students, says Jane Briggs Bunting, chair, Department of Rhetoric, Communication and Journalism.

"For journalism, the laboratory has been wonderful," Briggs-Bunting says. "We can now provide advanced computer graphics classes. You can see improvements in the student newspaper thanks to the laboratory." Briggs-Bunting adds that employers have been pleased with the computer skills of recent journalism graduates.

Jim McKay, chair, Math, says: "The computers add to students understanding of math."

McKay is planning to use the laboratory this summer for a math camp aimed at high-achieving high school students.



The new facility boasts 18 PC PowerMacs, new software and a laser printer.

Computer technology makes learning a language fun

Sara Surinck is typical of Oakland University students who are spending more time in the Modern Language Laboratory.

Not just because of course requirements, mind you.

While language instructors require first- and second-year students to spend at least one hour a week in the laboratory, other students just can't stay away.



Students come to the Modern Language Laboratory to study a foreign language, as well as to have fun.

"I come here because I want to be here," says Sara Surinck, a junior who is double-majoring in German and elementary education. "I have been coming here since my freshman year. The staff is friendly, and there's a lot to do. If I'm not on the computer, I'm watching a movie. I meet many people through the German club."

Between the videos, movies, games and tapes, students say they get a real feel for the language.

"The only way you're going to learn a language is by using it," Surinck says. "This is a great place to learn."

Surinck, who went to Rüsselsheim, Germany, as an exchange student in 1991, plans on returning to Germany to complete her education at the University of Frankfurt or University of Mainz.

"Studying a language opens up many doors for you," she says.

Joanne Wagerson, special lecturer, Spanish, agrees.

"Most language classes are communicative," she says. "The idea is to have students practice in the laboratory and then use the language in class."

The McGregor Foundation has provided two grants to the laboratory, which began

two years ago. Wagerson, who has taught at Oakland for the past six years, serves as its director. Seven students — three Americans, three French and one Spanish — work in the laboratory with Wagerson.

A variety of computer and audio-video tools — 30 Tandberg workstations, 15 VCRs, two Pioneer laser-disk players, two Panasonic world-system converters, a Panasonic moni-

tor, four IBM-compatible computers and three Macintoshes — help students learn a second language.

From the workstations, students can play audiotapes and videotapes in their language area. Professors also play select tapes and laser disks for students, listen to pronunciation and do testing.

"We also do random pairing where students work in small groups on activities designed to enhance their processing of a language," Wagerson says.

Other computer-enhanced educational amenities include Spanish, German and Chinese word-processing programs, CD Roms, computer games such as "Off to Europe," interactive laser-disk programs such as "A la Rencontre de Philippe" and "Montevidisco" and an authoring center

where faculty and students can create their own software programs.

"We are considering a satellite dish so we can have 24-hour foreign programming," Wagerson says. "I'm interested in anything we can do to help students acquire a second language."

First step, Russia — next, the world

Nathan Longan, assistant professor, Russian, took a sample CD displaying about 130 digital images of artifacts from the St. Petersburg State Ethnographic Museum in mid-December to the Russian Museum Exhibition, Kremlin.

The sample CD is the product of Oakland's St. Petersburg On-line Museum Project, a cooperative venture between the College of Arts and Sciences and international business consulting and marketing firm Neva-Hudson, which represents a group of St. Petersburg museums.

Commercial-quality CDs may follow, which could make the project self-supporting.

According to Longan, the museum supplied 20 disks containing 60 digital images, while the remaining images were computer-scanned at Oakland from a museum catalog. Oakland student Ivana Tomic, an intern with Neva-Hudson, delivered the disks.

The on-line museum received \$1,250 and \$1,000 in funding from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Center for International Programs, respectively. Longan serves as executive director.

In response to business and industry needs, Oakland plans three new graduate degrees

Graduate students interested in industrial applied mathematical sciences (including statistics), accounting or industrial software development may have three new degree options at Oakland University: Ph.D. in applied mathematical sciences, Master of Accounting and Master of Science in software engineering.

In the final approval stages, the proposed degrees reflect Oakland's commitment to academic excellence and response to business and industry needs. Here is a brief summary on each:

Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Mathematical Sciences

"Partnerships with industry are an important aspect of our program," says James H. McKay, chair, Department of Mathematical Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences. According to McKay, the collaborative nature of Oakland's program in applied statistics has made it one of the top four or five programs in North America.

For example, some 40 graduate students in applied statistics have held positions as Ford Cooperative Scholars since the program began in 1985. These students participate in projects designed to improve the quality and productivity of Ford products under the joint supervision of Ford personnel and faculty consultants. The selected cooperative scholars receive a 12-month stipend and work 120 days a year at a Ford site. Their graduate educational program is closely coordinated with their industrial responsibilities and learning experiences. In addition, the department administers an award-winning program in applied statistical methods for Ford.

The Ph.D. in applied mathematical sciences will give these students — and many others — the opportunity to advance their professional qualifications to a significantly higher educational level as well as prepare them to solve major industrial problems. The degree has been designed to enhance Michigan's industrial competitiveness and hence help meet state goals.

The degree will offer specializations in continuous mathematics, applied discrete

mathematics and applied statistics. Admission requirements include a bachelor's degree with a major in the mathematical sciences, engineering, computer science, the physical sciences, the biological sciences or the health sciences. Degree requirements include 90 credits beyond the bachelor's, including 15 courses, exclusive of dissertation research credit, with at least eight specialization courses.

Master of Accounting

Two factors drive the creation of the School of Business Administration Master of Accounting degree: accounting students' desire to pursue higher degrees and pending changes in the educational requirements for CPA certification.

"People are our only resource in this competitive environment and we see advanced degrees as an important factor in our continuing recruiting process," noted Michael P. Cenko, partner, Price Waterhouse LLP, Detroit, and member, SBA Accounting Advisory Board. "Also, more and more states are adopting the 150-hour program for accounting majors which will place more emphasis on advanced degrees."

The program, which combines business core courses, accounting requirements and accounting electives, has four goals:

- 1) To prepare students for positions in public accounting firms, business and nonprofit organizations.
- 2) To maintain and increase enrollment in the undergraduate program and develop the graduate program and graduate offerings.
- 3) To provide students with the educational requirements necessary to take the CPA exam.
- 4) To further develop the accounting program to be worthy of continuing accreditation status.

Eligible students can choose from professional, cost management or accounting systems tracks. Degree requirements consist of 11 courses (33 credits): seven accounting classes (two required and five elective); one nonaccounting class; and three electives, two of which will be nonaccounting.

Admission requirements include general admissions requirements for graduate study, a bachelor's degree or equivalent and the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT). Evaluation of Oakland undergraduates interested in the program will begin during their junior year.

Master of Science in Software Engineering

Oakland's proximity to high-tech industry and business makes it a logical provider for software engineering education. In the late 1980s, the Department of Defense funded the Software Engineering Institute (SEI) at Carnegie-Mellon University to influence software engineering curriculum development.

Oakland's proposed M.S. program in the School of Engineering and Computer Science is based on the 1991 SEI curriculum recommendations, specifically aimed at government and industry concerns. It also follows the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers/ Association of Computing Machinery recommendations for software engineering curricula. A number of institutions, including Carnegie-Mellon, U.S. Air Force Academy, University of Scranton and George Mason University, have implemented similar programs.

The M.S. in software engineering will prepare Oakland students for careers in business and industry as well as enhance the skills of students already engaged in software engineering careers.

The SECS began to consider the degree when officials at the Tank & Automotive Command expressed interest in such a program, followed by officials at Chrysler, EDS and General Dynamics.

Admission requirements include a bachelor's degree, with preference given to computer engineering, computer science, mathematics and engineering majors; an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better in area of major and science, engineering and mathematics courses; and other specific requirements. Degree requirements include 32 credits of approved courses with a 3.0 or better cumulative GPA.

M.S. in Physical Therapy has the clinical touch

John Krauss '90 earned a graduate certificate in Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapy last June and was one of four graduates to receive the new Master of Science in Physical Therapy in December.

All 17 credits from the graduate certificate apply toward the 36-credit M.S., an advanced degree for physical therapists.

Krauss, a physical therapy clinical specialist at Henry Ford Rehabilitation, Southfield, shares his knowledge and skills. Along with being a clinical instructor at Oakland, Krauss supervises Oakland residents at Henry Ford Rehab.

"I carry about a 90-percent patient load, help educate other health care professionals through in-service education and oversee Oakland student residents," he says. "They must participate in a total of 440 clinical internship hours with a certified professional in orthopedic manual physical therapy."

Krauss says his graduate education was unique because it offered hands-on experience with patients and pure science. Jody Tomasic '81, '95, is a member of both the B.S. and M.S. in Physical Therapy's first graduating classes. "I would have never done a master's another way," Tomasic says "The residency aspect of the program really appealed to me."

Tomasic, director, Oakwood Hospital's Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy Center, Dearborn, particularly liked the program's orthopedic focus. "Specialization makes you more efficient and effective," she says. "You are much more able to identify and treat problems rather than just put bandages on them."

The master's program offers a clinical musculoskeletal track with two specializations: orthopedic physical therapy and orthopedic manual physical therapy.

Kornelia Kulig, associate professor, Physical Therapy, and coordinator, Orthopedic Residency, says professional needs drive the new M.S. program: "Entry-level physical therapy education is

moving from the baccalaureate to the master's level, but many practicing professionals are skilled clinicians who only hold bachelor's degrees."

Clinical practice makes perfect

Residency education — a mainstay of the medical profession for decades — has moved into the physical therapy arena.

Representatives from eight manual physical therapy residency programs gathered at Oakland University in 1990 to help promote orthopedic manual therapy training and residency study. They formed the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists (AAOMPT), which led to the United States joining the International Federation of Orthopedic Manual Therapists (IFOMT) in 1992.

The AAOMPT currently encompasses three types of residency programs: university-based programs, private clinic programs and programs offered by health-care corporations.

"Going through the program and residency motivated me to continue my education as a clinician, which is why I sought out medical school," says Jeff Placzek '88, who received a certificate in Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapy in

1992 and is a second-year medical student at Wayne State University. "Residencies are an important part of any clinician's education."

Mastering the terminology

The new Master of Science in Physical Therapy is different from the Master of Physical Therapy degree.

The M.S. is an advanced degree for individuals already educated, licensed and experienced as PTs. Oakland's Master of Physical Therapy is an entry-level professional program that represents the 1-1/2 years of a three-year program initiated while students are undergraduates. That program, initiated in 1990, began in the Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy program.



John Krauss '90, '95, a physical therapy clinical specialist, supervises Oakland student residents applying their skills at Henry Ford Rehabilitation, Southfield. He is also a clinical instructor at Oakland.

Wish list of laboratory needs becoming a reality for engineering students and faculty

Steve Plummer, a senior in electrical engineering at Oakland University, wants three things for Christmas: a new capacitance meter, a spectrum analyzer and a digital oscilloscope for the School of Engineering and Computer Science's control systems laboratory.

Plummer, pointing toward the wave-analysis experiment on the bench in front of him, says, "This would go much faster and I could get a lot more done. Plus, some analysis is impossible without a spectrum analyzer."

Convinced that today's laboratories require today's tools, three professors from the Department of Electrical and Systems Engineering submitted a funding proposal for modernization of Oakland's electrical, electronics and computer control laboratories, which contain tools from the '60s, '70s and '80s.

Ka C. Cheok, Andrew Rusek and Naim A. Kheir's proposal received a \$42,065 nod from the Strategic Plan Implementation Fund. The proposal cites the benefits of such technological innovations as virtual instrumentation, digital scopes and four-color-beam versus single-beam digital analyzers. Additional funding is expected to come from the school and the department.

These new tools will help students make better transitions from the university to the workplace — and make them more productive as well, according to Cheok, associate professor, Engineering.

In addition, the modernization effort will showcase the School of Engineering and Computer Science to students, potential collaborators and members of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, which is scheduled for a 1996 site visit.

"We also consider this as an investment in our laboratories, targeting our move to the new Science and Engineering Complex," says Rusek, professor, Engineering.

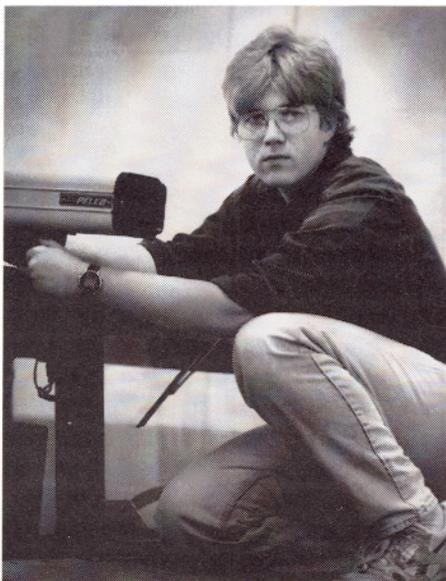
In his laboratory/office, students can see the history of communications systems via a collection of old vacuum-type radio receivers. "I brought that one from Poland," Rusek says about a large black receiver. "I used it to listen to the Voice of America and BBC in the '70s."

Nearby the receivers are two Gateway 2000 PCs with plug-in circuit boards for experimentation. Rusek noted that 12 such PCs were previously bought for the various laboratories and will support the new equipment.

Students from other departments in the school also use the electrical, electronics and computer control laboratories. In addition, minority high school and junior high students in DAPCEP (Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program) use the electric circuits and computer laboratories during their fall and spring Saturday morning classes.

Both Rusek and Cheok agree that the modernization effort will help meet industry's needs by enhancing the technological readiness of prospective and current engineers.

"It's very important right now to educate engineers from industry to simulate the behavior of different systems and to measure those systems so they can design more sophisticated and reliable units," Rusek says.



Bill Young, a master's student in Systems Engineering, took second place in the 1994 Unmanned Ground Robotic Vehicle Competition, held on Oakland's campus.

Accordingly, Ford Motor Co. awarded Cheok, Kheir, Rusek and Manohar Das, associate professor of Engineering, a \$100,000 grant to develop a course in mechatronics, the study of the mechanical and electrical components of different systems.

The updated laboratories will also benefit the engineering students who design and build autonomous vision and sonar-guided vehicles for entry in the International Unmanned Ground Robotic Vehicle Competition, held annually on Oakland's campus.

Bill Young, who is working on a master's degree in Systems Engineering, was one such student. His vehicle, "Coyote," took second place in the 1994 competition, and he is currently working with Cheok on a graduate project that has both military and industrial applications.

"The basic idea is that everything is unmanned," Cheok says. "The vehicles are autonomous — the computer is making the decisions — there's no human in the loop."

Although the new equipment that offers such promise to students like Young and Plummer has yet to be acquired, the process has begun.

Retooling through digital imaging

Yesterday's oscilloscope used a cathode-ray tube or similar instrument to depict electrical changes on a screen. Today's digital oscilloscope has such conveniences as an auto-scale that instantly sets up measurements, simple cursory operations for automatic specification of a measured signal and the capability to download acquired digitized data to a printer.

Virtual instrumentation uses the power of a personal computer and analog-digital input-output devices to provide processing, storage and color displays that allow users to design and build customized "virtual instruments" that meet their specific needs. Virtual instruments are user-defined, application-oriented, software-driven electronic tools.

Michigan Center for Automotive Research merges academics and automotive expertise

Oakland University's new Michigan Center for Automotive Research (MICAR) is ready for the road.

MICAR, has received its initial funding of \$150,000 from the Oakland University Foundation. MICAR will be overseen by the School of Engineering and Computer Science and staffed principally by retired automotive industry experts. It will offer specialized courses, interdisciplinary academic collaboration and a merger of applied learning, academic theory and research with a practical orientation.

According to Michael Polis, dean, School of Engineering and Computer Science, the search for an executive director for MICAR is well under way. "We hope to have an executive director in place by early next year," he explained. "And once we have that executive director, we'll put together an advisory committee."

MICAR began as the brainchild of Polis and alumnus William L. Kath '63, a member of Oakland's first graduating class and former member of the SECS Advisory Board.

Kath left Ford Motor Co. in January 1995 as part of an early retirement package. His 30-year career at Ford encompassed such positions as executive engineer in chassis, body and value engineering; resident director for Ford at Mazda Corp. in Hiroshima, Japan; and manager of technology strategies, Technical Affairs Group.

MICAR was designed on the theory that although financially independent, such

early retirees welcome a transition between career and retirement.

"Ford called it 'retirement,' but I called it 'commencement.'" said Kath, now vice president, Engineering, at Breed Technologies, Lakeland, Fla., a manufacturer of air bags and air-bag sensors.

"The idea was that Oakland and the early retirees could hook up and do something useful."

As the MICAR proposal evolved to its present form, the concept broadened to include retirees from other companies as well.

"Many automotive-related companies are restructuring. Due to the concentration of these companies in the Oakland-Macomb-Wayne County areas, there are numerous automotive industry early retirees who have practical experience which can make them valuable collaborators," noted Polis.

"In parallel to industry's need for specific research and subject matter packaged in ways which are not traditional to U.S. universities, there is an enlarging pool of Chrysler/Ford/GM retirees with the experience and ability to deliver research results and to help offer the type of courses being sought by industry."

MICAR is designed to be a cross-functional effort. It's expected that faculty from the School of Engineering and Computer Science, the Department of Mathematical Sciences and many other academic units will be involved in future MICAR projects.

The MICAR proposal calls for initial workspace to house the executive director,

an office manager and desks and workstations for two to three associates. As the new Science and Engineering Complex comes on-line, the center should have more space to grow into.

Long-term visions for MICAR include:

- On-campus research and problem-solving projects of an incremental \$100,000 to \$500,000 per involved professor.
- Closer university relationships with local suppliers leading to endowed faculty chairs, research/facility grants and shared laboratories.
- Innovative teaching/learning techniques using early retirees as guides, TA-type instructors and examples of people with "recycled" careers.

But will retired executives be satisfied working part time for a fraction of their former pay? Both Polis and Kath think yes, noting that MICAR will give them new titles and new visions — visions that are in sync with the Oakland University Strategic Plan 1995-2005, which seeks to create a workforce of learners needed to serve business and industry in the information age.

Oak Park joins Oakland in college incentive scholarship program

When it comes to education, Alex Bailey believes in the power of positive role models.

As the superintendent of Oak Park Public Schools — a 3,400-student school district that is struggling with many of the same problems of many urban districts — Bailey says he has already witnessed the positive ripple effect Oakland University has made.

Oak Park High School is the newest partner in Oakland University's Wade H. McCree, Jr. Incentive Scholarship Program. Last fall, 25 Oak Park High School freshmen were inducted into the

"There are still many minority kids who need an assurance of opportunity. Many don't believe that hard work and diligence means you'll be successful."

That's where Oakland students, like Lashonda Blurgeois, can be helpful. The 19-year-old sophomore is a McCree Scholar from Pontiac Northern. She's an English and political science double major who plans to attend law school. Along with a full course load, Blurgeois is an Americorp student, committed to working 900 hours in Pontiac's Unity Park neighborhood, and also puts in two shifts a week as a residence hall night-watch worker.

Blurgeois volunteers some of her free time to speak to high school students in the McCree Program.

"I tell them it's a good opportunity and that nothing is easy," she says. "I tell them that anything worth having is worth working for, and with the McCree Program, you can't lose if you keep your grades up."

Bailey says the collaboration impacts the entire high school.

"We need a good 30 percent or so of our students who are accelerating and not accepting the plight of urban schools," he says. "It helps set a different climate within the school to have kids talking about going to college. In general, we spend a lot of time and money on at-risk students. But we also need

to spend at least an equal amount on students who we feel have potential and a willingness to succeed."

Oakland University began the scholarship program with Pontiac Public Schools in 1988 and with Detroit Public Schools in 1990. The program is named for the man who was the first African-American solicitor general of the United States and who was also a distinguished professor of law for the University of Michigan. Today most of the state's 15 public universities have McCree Programs with neighboring school districts.

Each student inducted into the program signs a participation agreement that specifies the terms of the scholarship and encourages them to participate in university activities. Last fall, Interim President Gary D. Russi provided McCree Program students with \$22,000 from the OU Board of Trustees Academic Success Fund for academic, social and cultural activities.

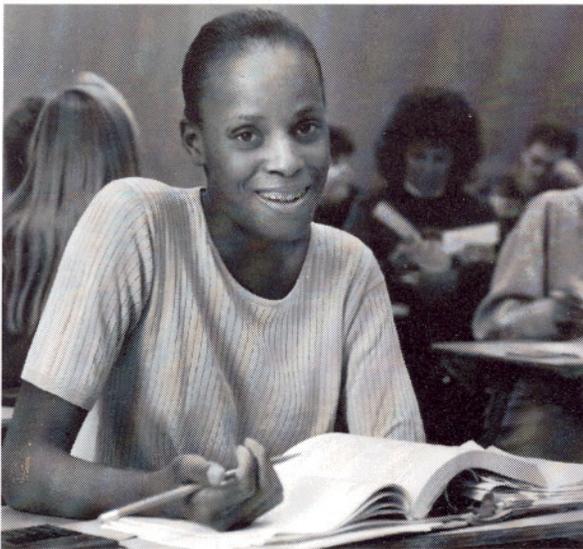
Oak Park is also supported by the Oak Park Business and Education Alliance (OPBEA).

"To be a more viable community, it is necessary for students to understand that in the world of work, reward is based on performance," says Clare Kabel, OPBEA executive director. "With this program, we are trying to reinforce those habits."

Lynn Hockenberger, director of OU's Office of Learning Resources, administers the program. Two graduate students from the School of Education and Human Services' counseling program work as McCree student advocates.

In January, high school students in the program attended a Pioneer basketball game, and in February students enjoyed the Meadow Brook Theatre production of *The Piano Lesson*.

Beginning in March, students will attend a six-week Saturday program, titled *Rockets, Rainbows and Motors*, offered through the School of Engineering and Computer Science. While students are in session, their parents will attend on-campus activities including seminars on financial aid and careers for the 21st century.



Lashonda Blurgeois is a sophomore at OU and McCree scholar from Pontiac Northern High School.

McCree Program, which guarantees a full-tuition scholarship at OU for students who fulfill a number of criteria, including a 3.00 GPA in college preparatory courses during their high school years.

"Many are potential first-generation college kids," Bailey says. "It's the interaction our students have when they let others know they've been to Oakland University that's important. When students who look like them and are not much older than them, have ties to a university, it makes them feel empowered."

Videotape documents real-life teaching/research excellence

Mathematics is getting real at Longfellow Elementary Professional Development School in Pontiac — and Oakland University has the video to prove it.

Dyanne M. Tracy, associate professor, Education, and Oakland students Anthony Garth and Mary Carleton recently filmed, edited and produced a videotape that shows math in action at Longfellow, which joined forces with the School of Education and Human Services in 1991 to become a “center for research and learning.”



“The mutual benefit from professor to teacher to Oakland student to Longfellow student is wonderful. We all teach each other something,” says Dyanne M. Tracy, Associate Professor, Education.

The 45-minute video, narrated by Tracy and titled *Learning to Teach to Learn: Implementing the Standards at an Urban Professional Development School*, documents changes made by teachers, students and families as they teach and learn math at Longfellow.

“Both Anthony and Mary’s work on this project has been above and beyond,” Tracy says. “Mary and I wrote the script together and Anthony is the director, cinematographer and editor. Except for the

cost of renting a lighting kit, purchasing tapes and using the video editing equipment, all of the money went back to the students.”

Funded by two grants from the Oakland University Foundation for \$3,740 and \$1,541, respectively, the video showcases the implementation of a hands-on, activity-based approach to math at Longfellow. Students learn math by doing math via OU’s innovative Beginning School Math (BSM), games, art and other manipulatives.

As one Longfellow teacher notes on the video, a high correlation exists between the time a student spends doing math and that student’s performance. With the new math practices now in place at Longfellow, students as well as teachers enjoy math time.

“Our goal was to get teachers in grades three to five to be able and willing to integrate more hands-on materials into their classrooms,” Tracy says. “Kindergarten through second-grade teachers are typically willing to do hands-on math, but as you move up the grades, teachers feel more of a need to use paper and pencil.”

Tracy served as a math resource teacher-researcher at Longfellow from January 1992 to April 1995, planning and holding teacher in-services, working with groups of kindergartners through fifth-graders, facilitating “Family Math Fun Nights,” supporting resident teachers through curriculum planning, directing graduate student research and co-teaching with Longfellow teachers. She spent a 1993-94 sabbatical at the school to support recommendations made by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) *Standards and the Michigan Essential Goals for Mathematics*.

According to Tracy, changes in the math portion of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test for fourth-graders encouraged the new practices because “the teachers are realizing that they must now implement manipulatives.”

The Longfellow/Oakland partnership has brought change to both institutions, helping Longfellow teachers and students see the connections between math, other subjects and the real world and helping Oakland professors and students see that Longfellow is the real world.

Seventy-nine Oakland students are now participating in field placements at Longfellow for a combined 5,000 hours of contact time — and 15 student teachers, 10 School of Nursing students and two counseling students are completing internships there as well. In addition, education faculty members James Hughes and Eric Follo are working in Longfellow classrooms.

“The mutual benefit from professor to teacher to Oakland student to Longfellow student is wonderful,” Tracy says. “We all teach each other something.”

The video has been distributed to internal and external audiences. Tracy also presented the video at the NCTM annual meeting in San Diego in April. In the meantime, she is continuing her quest to bring innovative math practices to the real world — and thus encourage teaching and research excellence.

Oakland researchers fast becoming recognized leaders in their fields

New life begins when two cells produce another cell. That cell then splits over and over again, and the new cells take on specific functions.

Research and education in the biomedical sciences at Oakland University occur in much the same way. As research findings conceived by Oakland's biomedical researchers grow into successful commercial applications, these researchers are becoming recognized leaders in their specialty areas. For example:

- Chemistry Professor Denis M. Callewaert has founded two biomedical companies, one of which, Oxford Biomedical Research, received six small business grants from the National Institutes of Health in 1994. Bristol-Meyer bought the patent rights to technology developed by his other company, Proteins International.
- Physics professors Michael Chopp and Norman Tepley, both of whom have dual appointments at Oakland and Henry Ford Hospital, recently received major grants for their work in stroke and migraine research, respectively.
- Chemistry Professor Tadeusz Malinski has received patent approval for an electrochemical sensor for nitric oxide and Chemistry Professor R. Craig Taylor holds patents



Physics Professor Norman Tepley, who holds dual appointments at Oakland and Henry Ford Hospital, recently received a major grant for his work in migraine research.

for potential anti-viral and anti-tumor agents.

- Virinder Moudgil, professor and chair, Department of Biological Sciences, has recently discovered that a tumor suppressor gene is regulated by sex steroids in a human breast cancer cell line. This discovery may lead to new hormonal therapies of breast cancer.

Breaking new ground

Biomedical Sciences programs and support services have expanded accordingly. Oakland University not only boasts the nation's first B.S. program in medical physics and an interdisciplinary B.S. in biochemistry, but its biomedical sciences doctoral program, and its biotechnology program, established in 1983 and 1987 respectively, led to formation of the Institute for Biochemistry and Biotechnology (IBB) in 1989.

The IBB promotes increased biotechnology research activities, collaborations among biochemistry researchers and public awareness of Oakland's biochemical

research efforts. A new proposal, jointly developed by the departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, the Interdepartmental Biochemistry Committee and the IBB, seeks to expand upon this by:

- Establishing a Center for Biomedical Research (CBR) to promote and coordinate support for biomedical research activities.

- Adding and retaining faculty with strong records in biomedical research and education.
- Adding a specialization in biochemical communication to the biomedical sciences Ph.D. program.
- Increasing the number and quality of predoctoral students in the biomedical sciences program.
- Providing additional opportunities for undergraduate participation in biomedical research at Oakland.

Proposal receives funding support

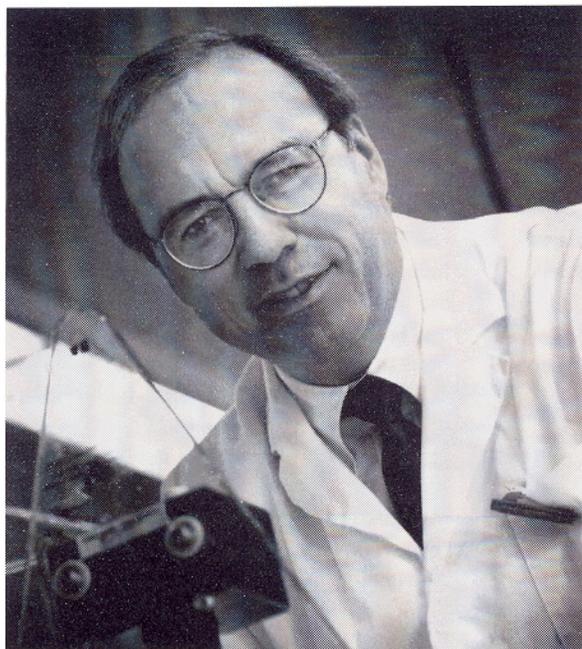
The proposal, designed "to maintain excellence and further strengthen and advance biomedical research and education at Oakland," received a \$154,000 commitment from the Strategic Plan Implementation Fund for 1995-96. Funding for 1996-97 is contingent on this year's progress.

The proposal was drafted by the following ad-hoc committee members: Callewaert, director, Institute for Biochemistry and Biotechnology; Kathleen H. Moore, coordinator, Undergraduate Concentration in Biochemistry; Moudgil, chair, Biological Sciences; Tepley, chair, Physics; and Paul Tomboulion, chair, Chemistry. Michael Sevilla, acting associate dean, Arts and Sciences; and Donald McCrimmon, director, Sponsored Programs Administration, assisted.

To be comprised of active biomedical researchers from a cross section of departments and administered by an executive committee appointed by the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the new center will facilitate additional collaborations among biomedical researchers and acquisition of multi-user instruments.

"We believe that biomedical science and research presents a critical opportunity for the institution and the surrounding community," says David J. Downing, dean,

Continued on next page



Chemistry Professor Denis M. Callewaert, director, Institute for Biochemistry and Biotechnology, says the new Center for Biomedical Research may be launched as early as next summer.

College of Arts and Sciences. "With the unique potential resulting from three retirements in the Department of Biological Sciences, increased interaction with the cardiovascular group at Henry Ford Hospital and the prospect of a new Ph.D. track in biochemical communication, the time is optimal for establishing a Center for Biomedical Research (CBR)."

Callewaert says a formal committee is being established, with the intent to develop the center by the start of the next academic year. In addition, three new faculty members and a biochemical communication specialization, pending approval, are expected to be in place by fall 1996.

"Three specializations were planned for the Ph.D. program in biomedical sciences: medical physics, health and environmental chemistry; and the biology of aging," Callewaert says. "The biology of aging specialization never took off. We're currently amending the program to include one in biochemical communication instead."

The new specialization would be the first doctoral program in Michigan to focus on advancing basic research on biochemical cellular communication and applying such advances in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries.

A simple start-up expected

Start-up is expected to be relatively simple, with a strong group of biological sciences and chemistry faculty "staffing" the specialization and many core courses already in place. Library materials in biochemical communication, however, will need to be acquired.

The new center and specialization should attract more top-notch doctoral candidates —

and provide additional opportunities for grant and contract support. In addition, several prominent biomedical researchers at Henry Ford Hospital have expressed interest in helping develop such a program.

Funding for the three additional biomedical faculty members — one senior and two entry-level — will come from the College of Arts and Sciences.

"If we can identify prospective faculty who can meet the teaching needs of the biological sciences department and also do biomedical research, so much the better," Callewaert says.

Fellowships for three doctoral students to help staff the CBR are also on the agenda, as is a summer biomedical program for promising undergraduates.

Such opportunities will produce future researchers with state-of-the-art specialties — and breathe new life into the biomedical sciences.

Forever the family business

Robert Kleiman, associate professor, Finance, is taking the family business into cyberspace. Look for his "Kleiman Family Business Index" in the Internet magazine *Net Marquee*, edited by Dave Gumpert, former editor of *Inc.* magazine.

According to Kleiman, director of Oakland's new Center for Family Business, the feature will follow the fortunes of preeminent family businesses nationally.

In addition, Kleiman, who has consulted with such major companies as Abitibi-Price, Ford, Volkswagen and Walt Disney, is participating in a comprehensive study of large family businesses with John Martin of the University of Texas-Austin and Bill Petty of Baylor University.

"We're looking at the financial performance of publicly traded family-controlled enterprises," Kleiman says. "The preliminary results are fairly interesting. We

matched these companies with nonfamily companies of the same size and industry. We're finding, for a variety of reasons, that family businesses are better



Associate Professor Robert Kleiman

performers. To a large extent, they're among the best managed firms in their respective industries."

Oakland researchers study DNA changes due to ionizing radiation

Thanks to new software and hardware in the Electron Spin Resonance Research Laboratory at Oakland University, researchers are discovering how ionizing radiation affects cancer patients.

Purchased via a \$4,800 grant from the Oakland University Foundation, the modeling program and Gateway 2000 P5-100 computer help researchers perform simulations in seconds that once took days.

"We have recently made use of the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory at Michigan State University. There they produce ion beams — the nuclei of atoms accelerated in a cyclotron to almost the speed of light,"

Chemistry Professor Michael D. Sevilla says.

"The beams exit the cyclotron and impinge on our set-up, which contains DNA samples. We're basically radiating DNA with these ion beams to investigate the chemical damage that occurs to the DNA molecule."

According to Sevilla and David Becker, adjunct associate professor, Chemistry, ion beams hold promise for cancer therapy. Loma Linda Medical Center and Massachusetts General Hospital currently use proton beams, which are similar to ion beams, on cancer patients. Patients report no significant pain or ill effects.

"Say you have a tumor inside a patient," explains Sevilla. "An ion beam can be adjusted so it will penetrate and stop at that tumor. The last bit of an ion beam's traveling path contains most of its energy deposition, which is where most of the damage is done. So you're able to control the damage so it's primarily at the tumor site, not on the intervening tissue."

Becker concurs: "It does the least undesirable and the most desirable damage. It's also presumed that patients will not get as sick with this type of radiation compared to older radiation treatment programs."

In addition to charting chemical processes that occur to DNA after damage, the Electron Spin Research Group is investigating chemical processes that protect DNA from damage. The National Institutes of Health funds the group's research.

One of four in the world investigating radical mechanisms in DNA resulting from ionizing irradiation, the group's current focus is the "oxygen enhancement effect."

With the new modeling program and computer, the group can model this effect, characterized by the fact that cells irradiated in the presence of oxygen die more easily than oxygen-deprived cells.

"There's also a controversy about whether radiation-produced electrons can travel through DNA," Sevilla says. "Some people assert that when you add an electron, it can move rapidly up and down the DNA strand, which could be damaging or protective. Our modeling studies don't

agree with these assertions."

Group members have penned 35 papers which have appeared in peer-reviewed journals since 1988. The group is now working on a hypothesis paper on the oxygen enhancement effect for presentation at the April 14th Radiation Research Society meeting in Chicago.

"People ranging from physicists to biochemists to medical doctors attend our meetings," Becker says. "They want to know what happens when the radiation hits. We don't investigate what happens at the instant it hits, but rather the chemical events a few seconds after. These events are a linchpin to understanding the biological effects of irradiation."

Follow-up goals include developing a quantitative model that relates the oxygen enhancement effect to its chemical and biological effects and using the software and hardware for related research projects.

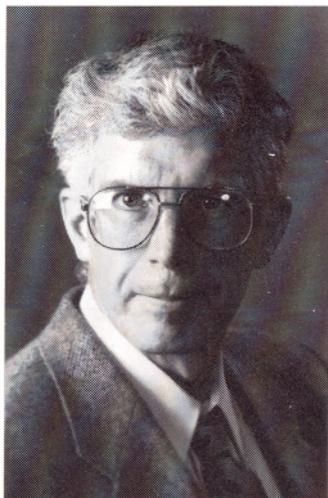
"There's little known about what happens to the chemistry of DNA when radiation occurs," Becker says. "A few people have taken a rather broad-brush approach, but we've been honing in on the real details. It's exciting because everything we see is new."

'I've really learned a lot'

Therese LaVere, a senior majoring in Engineering Chemistry, has worked with Oakland's Electron Spin Resonance Group since the end of her freshman year. "I had Michael Sevilla for freshman chemistry, and he announced he needed help in the laboratory," she says. "I really enjoyed the opportunity to work on such a high-level project as a freshman."

In addition, her name appears on two articles co-authored with professors Michael D. Sevilla and David Becker: *ESR Detection at 77K of the Hydroxyl Radical in the Hydration Layer of Gamma-Irradiated DNA* (Vol. 140, *Journal of Radiation Research*) and *Yield of .OH in Gamma-Irradiated DNA as a Function of DNA Hydration: Whole Transfer vs. .OH Formation* (submitted for publication).

LaVere gained both experience and confidence through her involvement. She works five to 10 hours in the group's lab during fall and winter and full time during the summer. "I've really learned a lot of problem-solving skills and can work independently in the lab," she says. "I'm not timid like when I first started."



Michael D. Sevilla

Center for Family Business offers survival skills to area companies

It's boom time.

More than 70 colleges and universities now operate family business centers, most opening their doors during the past few years.

Oakland University's Center for Family Business is one of them. It's also the first of its kind in Michigan.

Contributing to the boom is an aging population of family business owners who began after World War II and face attrition. About 90 percent of American businesses are family owned or controlled, generating about half each of the gross national product and the United States payroll. Less than 30 percent of them, though, will see second-generation management. And, less than half of these will survive to the third generation.

Robert Kleiman, center director and associate professor, Finance, notes that succession is not the only issue facing family businesses. Family business owners must consider inter-family dynamics, estate planning and a national trend toward mergers and acquisitions of family businesses as well.

"This is a central issue that family businesses face," Kleiman says. "Do they go ahead and stay within their regional target market or do they attempt to expand in other geographical areas or product lines? Over the last few months, we've seen a number of family businesses in the Detroit market being acquired by larger competitors. The question is, do you remain independent or do you sell out?"

"There's a lot of this going on within the retailing sector because many family owned retailers are facing competition from 'big box' retailers — particularly in

the hardware and bookstore areas. You have to ask if you have the necessary capital to survive."

Owners of family-owned businesses learned about such issues at a reception at Meadow Brook Hall in September. The



Family business owners attended a kick-off reception for the Center for Family Business at Meadow Brook Hall. From left: Mitch Newman, GM Underwriters Association, Rochester; Mike Palazzola, Derderian, Kann, Seyferth & Salucci, P.C., Troy; and B.J. Cipa, T.C.T. Stainless, Sterling Heights.

center's first breakfast briefing in October addressed succession planning strategies, and the second, in January focused on finance.

Helping family-business owners answer such tough questions at the quarterly breakfast briefings are Oakland faculty and the center's eight local sponsors: Derderian, Kann, Seyferth & Salucci, P.C., accounting, Troy; Comerica Inc., commercial banking, Birmingham; Great Lakes Strategies, L.L.C., employee benefits, Birmingham; Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., life insurance, Farmington Hills; Meadowbrook Insurance Group, property and casualty insurance, Southfield; Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., money management, Dearborn; Pepper Hamilton & Schetz, legal services; Detroit; and Seidman & Co., investment banking, Ann Arbor.

"We work predominantly with family-owned businesses. Through our work, we saw a need for counseling and education in the area of transferring family businesses from one generation to the next, leadership and other related issues," says Michael

Palazzola '78, owner/director, Derderian, Kann, Seyferth & Salucci, P.C.

Palazzola and partner Ursula Scroggs participated in initial center discussions with George E. Stevens, former dean, Business Administration, Kleiman and

Eileen Peacock, chair and associate professor, Accounting and Finance. "Because the primary focus of the endeavor is educational in nature, it only made sense that we involve an educational unit," Palazzola says. "Of course, my first choice was Oakland. They proposed something similar to this and we went ahead and took it to the next level."

In addition to the breakfast briefings, the center offers a quarterly newsletter, retreats and seminars on specialized topics and a resource center in Varner Hall that features printed and on-line information.

Approximately 10 small businesses have paid the center's \$500 membership fee and Kleiman expects that number to grow. He estimates there are 1,000 family businesses in the Detroit area responsible for some \$5 million in sales each. Among them are Little Caesar's, Stroh's, ABC Appliance Warehouse, Thornapple Valley Inc. and DOC Optical Center.

"From the perspective of charitable contributions, family-owned businesses are key," Kleiman says. "It's often these businesses rather than Fortune 500 companies that endow buildings and chairs at universities. The preservation of the family business is vital to the health of the community."

When it comes to placement and experiential learning... The record speaks for itself

In record numbers, seniors and alumni seeking full-time employment, students pursuing career-related jobs and prospective employers flocked to the Department of Placement and Career Services during 1994-95.

Placement efforts pay off

About 800 Oakland students and alumni registered with the department in 1994-95. More than 350 students and alumni interviewed on campus with employers, more than 700 visited with employers during information sessions and open houses and some 500 attended career-information events.

Employer activity at Oakland increased by 53 percent from 1993-94, with 128 employer visits. Concurrently, student/alumni interviews increased by 47 percent.

Additional employment activities include employer requests for candidate referrals, candidate referrals and job listings for the department's job-vacancy bulletin, Job Post, which increased by 134 percent, 91 percent and 38 percent, respectively.

Career-information events, such as the January Student of Color Career Fair and the March Leadership Career Fair, are also popular with students, says Robert B. Thomas, director, Placement and Career Services. Other similar events include the Health Careers Job Fair, Business/Engineering/Computer Science Career Information Day and SEHS/HRD Career Information Day.

A competitive edge

According to Thomas, students who work in their chosen fields versus at "fast food jobs" have a competitive edge when it comes to career placement upon graduation.

"Students are working in higher percentages," Thomas says. "If that work is career related and closely tied to their academic programs, it's more valuable

from a placement point of view. We develop the mechanisms to help them find these types of jobs."

The jobs come in the form of cooperative education and internships, also called "experiential learning." Nearly 200 Oakland students participated in co-op opportunities last year, collectively earning about \$1.67 million.

Available for students majoring in the School of Business Administration, School of Engineering and Computer Sciences and a few other selected majors, the co-op student headcount was up 6 percent over 1993-94, with notable increases in engineering and computer science (up 49 percent) and arts and sciences/other College of Arts and Science majors placements (up 14 percent).

Twenty-four new co-op employers came on board as well, making for a 20-percent increase.

Internships — around and about

About 160 students performed internships and AmeriCorps assignments in 1994-95, bringing in \$252,380 in earnings and \$652,633 in grant funds (compared with \$427,811 the year before).

The AmeriCorps Oakland Program, awarded to Oakland last year, contributed significantly to the increase in grant funds. Oakland's piece of a federal program is dedicated to reducing violence and increasing retention in Pontiac schools, and utilizes some 40 student interns. The interns receive a "living wage," an educational stipend and the opportunity to work with high-risk youth.

Internships through Placement and Career Services differ from those offered

by specific academic departments in that they are primarily geared toward liberal arts students interested in the service professions or government employment.

Even more impressive is the 1994-95 graduating student survey indicated that one of every two students who used on-campus interviewing got hired through that process.

Working the Web

Oakland University students and alumni on the Information Super Highway can access information pertaining to on-campus recruiting, cooperative education and career resources via the World Wide Web at <http://phoenix.placement.oakland.edu>

Job listings, career information and research on potential employers are just a hypertext link away.

Studying other educational institutions will help Oakland fine-tune its strategic vision

Oakland University is looking at other educational institutions to benchmark resources, personnel, time and other factors associated with such initiatives as a new degree program, research or government lobbying efforts.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) is compiling useful information about two groups of colleges and universities — an Oakland “peer group” which includes institutions similar to Oakland in size, funding, programs and other attributes, and an “aspirant group,” institutions the university may want to use as models to guide its growth and development.

“It’s important to have a peer group that looks like you for use in comparing costs, programs and other benchmarking information,” OIRA Director Laura Schartman says. “By studying what other institutions are doing, we can get a better feel for where we are doing well, and where we can improve.”

Schartman says that comparing Oakland to other state universities in Michigan can be useful for some purposes, but has limits because these institutions vary enormously in mission, scope, size, student demographics and other important variables. “The only Michigan university in the peer group is Grand Valley State University.”

The OIRA report lists 14 peer institutions. Most are in the same “Masters I” classification as Oakland according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. But the number of doctoral degrees awarded by Oakland in recent years would enable it to be reclassified in the “Doctoral II” category.

In fact, three of the five top peers — Maryland, Cleveland and Wichita — are doctoral institutions and the list of potential aspirant schools includes only doctoral universities. According to Schartman, “That is clearly where Oakland deserves to be classified.”

Information from peers can be useful in budget discussions and also in lobbying efforts in Lansing for additional state support.

Compiling information on an Oakland peer group may also be a helpful planning tool.

“When we are considering particular issues or research projects, we now have a group of institutions that we can go to and ask ‘what are you doing about this?’” she says.

OIRA is getting feedback from the president’s cabinet and the deans to compile information on an aspirant peer group.

The aspirant group will give Oakland a group of schools to focus on in terms of direction for the future.

“We’ll be able to look at areas where we want to be stronger, for example, and maybe do some modeling,” Schartman says. “What do we like about a certain school? What are they doing well that we can also adapt to Oakland? What can we learn from them?”

“Part of our overall quality and assessment work is to get a better understanding

of what we do so we can do it better. We will use the aspirant group to provide some of the ‘visionary’ models to give direction to the improvement process.

“One of the university’s strategic guidelines is continuous planning and evaluation so that we can effectively chart the future of the university. The aspirant group will help us evaluate where we are now, compared to where we want to be in the future.”

Peer Group

(Institutions similar to Oakland University in size, funding, programs and other attributes)

Central Missouri State University
Cleveland State University
Eastern Illinois University
Grand Valley State University
Kean College of New Jersey
Montclair State College
Salem State College
Southern Illinois University-
Edwardsville
University of Maryland-Baltimore
County
University of Massachusetts-Boston
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Western Washington University
Wichita State University
Youngstown State University