

From the Office of the
President

Points of Pride

Colleagues,

The holiday season often compels us to think about the loved ones closest to us, but one of the things I love most about this time of year is that it also invites us to think about the opportunities we have to do good in our communities.

I think Winston Churchill eloquently stressed the importance of this when he said, "We make a living by what we get – but we make a life by what we give."

As we celebrate the holidays, I wish you all the joy of the season, and particularly that which the individuals and groups below have experienced – the joy of giving.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

OUT OF THE GATE

Aaron Helander – a former Presidential Scholar, two-time captain of the men's swimming and diving team, orientation group leader, Second Year Experience ambassador, OU CARES volunteer, Human Relations Award recipient and current graduate student assistant working in the Alumni Engagement office – did not wait long to seize an opportunity to give back to the academic community that provided him an exceptional undergraduate learning experience.



After graduating this spring, Aaron established the Helander (School of Business Administration) Social Impact Scholarship, which will support an OU student with a \$1,000 award each year.

There is no question that this accomplished alumnus will go on to do great things in the world. We are grateful for the beneficial impact he is already having here at Oakland University.

IN THE LONG RUN



John Van Camp, an OU alumnus and CEO of the Detroit nonprofit agency Southwest Solutions, has dedicated his 45-year career to improving quality of life for others. Over that time, he steadily expanded his role and contributions, and now oversees the agency's more than 50 community focused programs.

The organization's work has included development, construction and rehabilitation of hundreds of affordable housing units, restoration of historic buildings, and development of commercial space for small businesses and community service organizations. Over the last decade alone, Van Camp has helped create permanent housing for more than 1,700 people.

Both Van Camp and Southwest Solutions have garnered national attention and recognition for their successful work. On behalf of an Oakland University community that is proud to call him one of our own, I commend and congratulate this outstanding humanitarian and University ambassador.

OVER THE TOP

In less than a month's time, hundreds of Oakland University students, staff and alumni have collected more than a half ton of food to help alleviate hunger through the Macomb Food Program. They started with a goal to collect 500 pounds.



The efforts of the Macomb County Outreach team will have a tremendous impact in southeastern Michigan, as these contributions will be distributed to more than 50 area food pantries and hunger relief organizations.

We know that Oakland University's academic mission is vital to the strength, vitality and prosperity of the region. That being said, the campus community members involved in this food drive have demonstrated that there are many inspiring ways in which we can help make this a better world.

Kudos to you all!

*Is there a point of pride you feel is worth sharing with the campus community?
If so, please [submit your idea](#) for consideration.*

*If you are interested in exploring past editions of this newsletter,
we invite you to visit the [Points of Pride archive page](#).*

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