



Wednesday, August 27, 2003

New students invited to Convocation

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Oakland University will give incoming freshmen and their families a formal welcome to academia and an opportunity to meet faculty and university leaders at **New Student Convocation**. The ceremony, held Tuesday, Sept. 2, the first day of fall semester classes, offers a unique mix of tradition, information and entertainment.

Convocation descends from the clergy, members of the bench and bar, and other learned professions in the universities of medieval Europe. At today's colleges and universities, convocation represents the first time faculty and students are brought together in an academic year.

OU's convocation includes a traditional faculty procession in full academic regalia, informative and entertaining speakers, and a reception where students and their families can meet professors, deans and other university leaders.

Convocation speakers include OU President Gary Russi, Assistant Professor of Education Mary Stein, Vice President for Student Affairs Mary Beth Snyder, Student Body President Jonathan Parks and Orientation Assistant Steven Townsend.

"Convocation presents a welcoming environment and opportunity to learn a bit more about college life," Stein said. "It also represents a kind of send-off for parents. As a mother of four kids, three of whom have either graduated college or are currently enrolled, I can't separate my role as teacher from being a parent. So in writing my speech, I tried to address the things I hope for in my own children as they enter university life."

Stein is a 2003 Teaching Excellence Award winner noted for inspiring and mentoring students in elementary education. Her speech will address the excellence in teaching that students can come to expect from Oakland.

"I want to address the point that OU is unique in its level of teaching excellence and talk about the great experiences students can come to expect in their four years," Stein said. "I also hope to use a few examples of some of the great things students have achieved in their classes."

Following the convocation speakers, the Oakland University Pep Band and OU's athletic mascot "The Grizz" will teach the audience the OU Fight Song. Spirit Awards also will be given to the most enthusiastic students from this summer's freshmen orientations.

The ceremony begins at 3 p.m. in the Recreation and Athletics Center. The reception will be held from 4-5 p.m. Attire is business casual.

Attendees may park in lot 16, adjacent to Anibal House and Pryale House; lot 26, adjacent to Varner Hall; or in the university parking structure, located on Pioneer Drive across the street from the Education and Human Services Building. See the **Parking** Web page for more details.

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