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New employee program rewards cost-saving ideas

By **Dawn Pauli**, contributing writer

The new **Employee Suggestion Program** (ESP) is kicking off this week, and employees with fresh ideas to reduce costs, increase revenue, or improve efficiency or service can be rewarded up to \$5,000 for their suggestions.

"We truly believe the best ideas come from the people who are doing the work," said Peggy Cooke, director of auxiliary services and ESP coordinator. "It's a win-win situation for the university and our employees."

With encouragement from OU President Gary Russi, Cooke and Lynne Schaefer, vice president of finance and administration, recruited a committee of representatives from throughout campus last fall and began researching employee suggestion programs.

"We pulled together a great group of people to create a suggestion program," Cooke said. "We looked at what other universities were doing, and what we thought would work at Oakland."

The committee is responsible for soliciting, reviewing and evaluating the submitted suggestions. Suggestions should benefit OU by saving money, resources or time; generating additional revenue; improving service at no additional cost; or eliminating inefficiencies, waste or duplication of efforts. All full- or part-time Oakland University employees, including student employees, are eligible and encouraged to suggest ideas.

If a new idea or process is adopted, the first employee who submitted the idea will receive an implementation award based on actual savings or increased revenue. The employee is eligible to receive 10 percent of the savings or revenue based on one year's activity, up to a maximum of \$5,000. When savings can't be quantified, the employee will receive up to \$500.

The Employee Suggestion Program is self-funded, meaning awards will come from the cost savings or revenue generated from the suggestions.

Each employee who submits an eligible suggestion also will have his or her name entered into a periodic drawing for prizes.

Employees can submit suggestions online or via e-mail, fax or campus mail.

Complete details about the program and guidelines for participating are available on the **Employee Suggestion Program** Web site. For more information, e-mail suggest@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

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