



Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Students forego beach for work during break

By **Jeff Samoray**, *OU Web Writer*

Oakland University is a more tranquil place this week. The classrooms are empty, the parking lots are wide open, and the Oakland Center lacks its customary beehive atmosphere.

It's winter recess, and most students are enjoying a week away from their studies. Some went south in search of warm weather, others are relaxing with friends and family closer to home. A few others decided to forego a trip to the beach and remain on campus to work.

Those checking out materials from OU's **Kresge Library** might be served by junior Peter Coyl, who's working 11 hours this week as a student assistant at the circulation desk.

"I'm working because I couldn't afford to take the whole week off," said Coyl, a public administration and public policy major, who plans to get a master's degree in library science after he graduates. "I live on my own and work two jobs to pay for school. When I leave OU today, I'm going to my other job (at the Rochester Hills Public Library). It's a bonus to have the extra week to work and not worry about school, but I will take a couple days off to visit my nieces in Pennsylvania."

Library traffic is comparatively light this week, though one area of campus exhibiting a moderate amount of activity is the **Recreation and Athletics Center**. Senior English major Leesa Lepore and sophomore sociology major Patricia Joe are among several student workers who staff the front desk of the recreation side of the building.

"I'm using this time to jump ahead on my coursework," said Lepore, who also acts as a building supervisor. "I also really couldn't afford to go somewhere for break. I normally work 19 hours per week, but this week I'm putting in 35. I'm working seven out of the nine days we're on break."

Joe had an opportunity to join a Student Program Board trip to New York City but elected to stay on campus and work.

"I also have some cousins who invited me to visit them in Chicago, but I've got bills to pay and need the money," Joe said. "I would have spent money if I had left and be even further behind than I already am. I'm also going to go to the library after I leave work today."

The Recreation and Athletics Center is a facility run mainly by students. Among their responsibilities are opening and closing the building, selling memberships, and being the first responders in case of accident or injury.

"I took this job because I wanted to become more involved on campus," Lepore said. "I've met a lot of different people and a lot of people across campus know me. Even if they don't know me by name, they recognize me as the 'Rec Center girl.'"

Dodge Hall is fairly quiet this week, but a lot of work is being done in the lab of Virinder Moudgil, professor of biology, provost and vice president for academic affairs. Seema Shah, a master's student in biology, is conducting research related to breast cancer and preparing an exam to be given in BIO 201, a class in which she's a teaching assistant.

"I'm trying to get as much work done as I can," said Shah, who arrived at the lab at 6:30 a.m. on Feb. 24. "I'm studying a new protein that we're trying to standardize. I know that to get this project going I can't just take off. Maybe I'll go somewhere during the summer. But if you want to be successful, you have to put in the time. All of us who work in the lab will be here this week, and I'll be here every day of the break. Dr. Moudgil is also here every day and calls frequently to check on our progress."

Classes resume Monday, March 1, at 7:30 a.m. Visit the News @ OU Web site for a list of **special hours** several

campus offices and services are maintaining during the break. Administrative offices are maintaining normal business hours.

SUMMARY

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