



Friday, September 21, 2001

Grant helps students learn about business

Oakland University's **School of Business Administration (SBA)** recently received a \$50,000 grant from Ameritech-Michigan to establish an Entrepreneurship Institute (EI) to provide 23 high school students from under-served communities with early entrepreneurship training.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to reach high school students, and to teach them key lessons in developing a business," said Gary D. Russi, president of Oakland University. "We are especially grateful to Ameritech-Michigan for providing the resources to establish the Entrepreneurship Institute and for their generosity in helping high school students in this area."

The EI consists of three phases.

In phase one, students attend a one-week entrepreneurship camp on OU's campus. They learn, through experiential exercises, to identify opportunities and turn them into businesses. They also start mini-businesses and sell their products at area flea markets.

In phase two, student teams write business plans and meet weekly with SBA mentors, faculty members and local entrepreneurs to ensure the teams are improving their critical thinking and planning skills.

In phase three, students create a formal presentation to show to industry professionals.

The EI gives a \$500 scholarship to each student who successfully completes all aspects of the program. On top of that, Oakland University will give an additional scholarship to those students who attend OU's **School of Business Administration**.

Other components of the EI program that will be held throughout the year reach out to larger populations of students, primarily focusing on traditionally underserved school districts. An Entrepreneurship Career Fair is planned for this winter for over 650 students at Jefferson Middle School in Pontiac. The EI also will host workshops focusing on technological and entrepreneurial skills for over 200 ninth-graders and 200 other high school students.

"SBC Ameritech is pleased to make this grant as part of its commitment to helping students from all walks of life get the kind of quality education necessary for them to be successful in their careers," said Gail Torreano, president of Ameritech-Michigan. "Enhancing education is a priority of SBC Ameritech. Since 1995, the SBC Foundation has awarded more than \$108 million in grants to support improved student achievement, teacher preparedness, minority student success and increased use of new technologies in the classroom."

The EI also received \$12,500 from the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership.

SUMMARY

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