



Tuesday, October 9, 2001

## Make a Difference Day Kick-Off set for Oct. 10

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

To raise awareness of AmeriCorps-Oakland projects, Oakland University is holding a Make a Difference Day Kick-Off on Wednesday, Oct. 10, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Exhibit Lounge of the Oakland Center.

**AmeriCorps** is the national domestic Peace Corps, which helps provide community service needs and mentoring for children. In exchange for their services, AmeriCorps members receive education awards to help finance college or pay back student loans. The AmeriCorps-Oakland group has 38 members.

The kick-off also is a fundraising event. Baby pictures of noted OU persons will be on display and attendees will be asked to donate spare change to vote for the picture they think is the cutest. The monies collected will be donated to either the New York Firefighters **9-11 Disaster Relief Fund** or the **American Red Cross**. In addition, materials promoting **AmeriCorps** and the activities on Make a Difference Day, Saturday Oct. 27, will be available.

"The kick-off event helps us get the word out and get students interested in the project," said Carol Anne Ketelsen, AmeriCorps-Oakland program director. "The on-campus project is nice for people who aren't able to donate time on October 27. But many students really like to do something physical and see the people they're helping. We have many fraternities, sororities, other student organizations and some individual students, faculty and staff members help us."

This year's project involves Halloween-themed children's activities from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Howard Dell Community Center or the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pontiac.

"We'll have pumpkin and face paintings and other safe, fun activities for children," Ketelsen said. "They're activities the children wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to participate in. It also helps keep them involved rather than just hanging out or getting into trouble. We're also hoping to get some corporations or Pontiac businesses involved."

Last year, nearly 150 volunteers worked with AmeriCorps-Oakland members to help clean up Pontiac's Aaron Perry Park to prepare for the Harvest Festival.

For more information on Make a Difference Day and other **AmeriCorps** volunteer opportunities, call (248) 370-3213.

### SUMMARY

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