

STATEMENT

HONORARY DEGREE

September 11, 2023

Eugene Gargaro

From time to time, an institution of higher education pauses in its affairs to take special recognition of individual who have given unusual measure toward the betterment of humankind's intellectual, cultural, aesthetic, social and cultural fabric and who, in doing so, have touched the life of the institution in significant ways.

At this point in our ceremony, we take such pause to honor an outstanding individual.

Just as the conferral of the doctoral degree is a university's recognition of the highest academic achievement, so also is the conferral of the doctorate, honoris causa, a university's recognition of truly distinguished achievement beyond the classroom and campus.

Today, Oakland University is proud to confer the honorary degree upon an outstand citizen.

I invite EUGENE GARGARO to rise and step forward.

Eugene Gargaro, we honor you for your professional success as a distinguished attorney and for your many outstanding leadership contributions to the metropolitan Detroit region.

Notably, you served as chairman of the board of directors of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

In this capacity, you were instrumental in the oversight of a \$160M renovation and expansion of the DIA's respected status as a cultural treasure and one of the leading art museums in the country.

You also led a regional millage initiative that has provided \$230M to support the museum, as well as worked to protect the DIA during the city of Detroit's bankruptcy.

For all of this remarkable work, you were honored with the DIA's Lifetime Service Award for exemplary volunteer service.

Additionally, you have served as a member of the board of trustees of U-Detroit Mercy, Legacy Retinoid Medical Center, New Detroit and board chair of the Michigan Manufacturers Association and Citizens Research Council of Michigan.

You were also appointed president of the board at the University Liggett School, and to the board of governors of the Country Club of Detroit.

For all of your achievements and contributions, it is a great honor and special privilege for Oakland University to award to you, EUGEN GARGARO, the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanities.

Will PROVOST RIOS-ELLIS and DEAN PIERCE come forward to assist with the investiture.