

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

ESPORTS RIBBON CUTTING

February 2, 2022

Welcome to the Grizz Den... which I plan to make my home away from home, or better... my office away from my office.

I may be an esports novice, but I am fast learner and quite competitive.

< P A U S E >

I'm so pleased that we can be together in-person to launch the new e-sports arena here in the Oakland Center.

Thank you, Glenn McIntosh, our Vice President of Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer.

Glenn and his team are so in-touch with what students are looking for in a college experience. Because of the popularity of esports, we made it point to create a space for students here at the Oakland Center...

Thank you, Chris Reed, the director of the Oakland Center.

Chris does so much to make the OC accommodating to our students. He's been especially challenged over the nearly two years of the pandemic, and he's never wavered from coming up with ways to make students feel at home.

Thank you, Steve Waterfield, Director of Athletics, for your leadership... and for being an advocate for establishing the varsity esports team here at Oakland.

In December of 2019, Oakland University was the first Division I university in the state to announce the addition of a varsity esports team to its athletics program.

Congratulations to the Oakland Esports team and Head Coach Carl Leone for its successful fall season in League of Legends, Rocket League, Overwatch and Super Smash Brothers. They competed in 122 matches throughout the fall.

We think of the Grizz Den as a “den of possibilities.”

Here, we hope students will come in touch with a diverse range of other students with similar interests. And, of course, we hope they draw connections as they explore the relationships among game playing, emerging media and the digital possibilities in their academic disciplines.

Esports.... should be synonymous with e-learning.

So, again... Welcome to the Grizz Den.... Let the games begin.