

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

WELCOME RECEPTION FOR PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

February 9, 2023

- Welcome to the Golden Grizzly family... where we are so proud to provide the support you need as you begin your journey here at Oakland University.
- I want to acknowledge Academic and Student Services and Oakland's Honors College Dean Graeme Harper for creating such welcoming, warm and inspiring environment for our Presidential Scholars.
- As you get to know Dean Harper, you will learn that he is among your greatest advocates and supporters, a person of high integrity who is a role model to many.
- What lies ahead of you is a great adventure – perhaps the greatest adventure of your lives – where you will make discoveries about the academics that lay at the foundation of our civilization, the ever-changing natural and social world, and of course, discoveries about yourselves.
- This is where you will write the story of your future.
- And we are so proud to have the opportunity to have you here....
- You are a part of a great tradition that began with our founder, Matilda Dodge Wilson, whose vision was to establish a world-renowned university of academic excellence, a great institution of higher learning where the thoughts and ambitions of tomorrow's leaders are shaped....
- And you are those leaders of tomorrow...
- When you go out into the world.... People will be so impressed with your abilities and talents, and invariably ask: Where do you go to school, and after graduation, of course, where did you go to college?
- When you get asked that question, I want you to pause for a moment before you answer and let them wonder for a moment, and then tell them, "I'm a Golden Grizzly."

- You are a Golden Grizzly.... And you stand out because of who you are and what you will accomplish here.
- You are among the most academically accomplished students at Oakland University... and we know that you had many choices of where to go to college and you chose us....
- Thank you.
- It is our pledge, from the president to the cabinet to the deans and faculty....to be here for you.
- Simply put: Your success is our success...
- You might not realize it, but there is wisdom in the truism: Success breeds success.
 - Learning how to be success starts today.
- You know, I've worked at several universities and I'm familiar with most private colleges and public universities that attract high-achieving students...
- And I know your decision was a personal choice.
- That's why you will never be a number to us.... Your opinions will be heard. Your development as a student and a person is our greatest priority.
- This university has four strategic goals – student success, research, community engagement and diversity, equity and inclusion.
- When we think about those goals, we know everything is a consequence of student success.
- When I look around, I see the foundation of our university is right here in this room.
 - That foundation is the connection among students, faculty, administrators....
 - All working together....
 - All proud Golden Grizzlies....
 - All upholding our proud tradition of academic excellence.
- Because this connection, this unbreakable bond....you will succeed here and in your lives.
- Imagine what will your life look like when you reach your potential?
- What kind of opportunities will come your way?
- How will you be able to serve your community?
- How will you make the world a better place?

- You are a Golden Grizzly....
 - And you have taken the first, and most important step, in making your dreams come true.
- We hope you'll always remember... You are at the right place at the right time.
- Thank you...