

## Faculty, Staff and Student Recognition

*June 28, 2002*

Colleagues,

Before the events of summer cause the 2001-02 academic year to fade too quickly from our memories, I wanted to take a few minutes to recall some of the university's recent shining moments.

Clearly Founders' Day on April 17 brought into focus several areas of activity directly related to our 2010 vision, most notably the recognition of three new distinguished professors (Sheldon Appleton, Ron Cramer and Jane Eberwein - see The News @ OU for more detail) and the announcement of the 2002 Faculty Excellence Awards recipients. The latter include:

- \* **Jude Nixon**, associate professor of English, 2002 Teaching Excellence Award
- \* **Meir Shillor**, professor of Mathematical Sciences, 2002 Research Excellence Award
- \* **Balaji Rajagopalan**, assistant professor of Management Information Systems, 2002 New Investigator Research Excellence Award, and
- \* **Edith Diggory**, adjunct assistant professor of Music, Excellence in Teaching Award (first-ever award given to an outstanding part-time instructor).

Many other faculty members were recognized during the past term by external organizations for their outstanding work and service. I have included a few below:

A research paper authored by **Shravan K. Chintala**, assistant professor of Biomedical Sciences, and appearing in *Nature Medicine* was recently recognized among the top 10 percent of glaucoma research literature published in 2001 by the *International Glaucoma Review*. Dr. Chintala coauthored the "Activation of a tissue-specific stress response in the Aqueous outflow pathways of the eye defines the glaucoma disease phenotype" paper with N. Wang, M.E. Fini, and J.S. Schumann.

**Michael Chopp**, professor of Physics and scientific director of the Henry Ford Neuroscience Institute, recently led a study that was selected as one of the top-10 research advances for 2001 by the American Heart Association. Dr. Chopp and his team used, for the first time in a research setting, bone marrow cells to reduce the severity of stroke-induced disability.

**Andrea Eis**, special instructor of Art and Art History, recently received a grant from the National Art Education Foundation for the project, "Image, Object, Site: Progressive Perspectives of Greece; A Curriculum Model for Global Perspectives of Art Resources." She will serve as a visiting artist at the International Academy in Bloomfield Hills for the 2002-2003 school year, implementing a program that creates active learning experiences for high school international baccalaureate students

**Lunjin Lu**, visiting assistant professor of Computer Science and Engineering, recently received a National Science Foundation Career Award. Dr. Lu's research program builds on previous work of the principal investigator to make static program analysis more precise and more scalable. Dr. Lu's award totals \$421,594 over five years.

The American Heart Association awarded **Bradley Roth**, associate professor of Physics, a two-year Grant-in-Aid to study electrical impulses that cause the heart to either contract normally or develop a very rapid heartbeat that degenerates into potentially fatal spastic quivering. Dr. Roth is using a mathematical computer model to study how strong shocks can start and stop these impulses, which may lead to an understanding of how to build better defibrillators.

Congratulations are in order for two of our vice presidents as well. *Crain's Detroit Business* recently named Lynne Schaefer, vice president for Finance and Administration, one of Detroit's Most Influential Women. Mary Beth Snyder, vice president for Student Affairs, recently received the 2001-2002 Phyllis Law Googasian Award, which honors women who have contributed to the advancement of women at Oakland University through leadership, scholarship, advocacy, mentoring, program development or other activities.

All recognition of this type, of course, springs directly or indirectly from the university's service to our students. And, as we all know, we have some of the finest students in the country attending Oakland University. Many have recently been recognized for their activities inside and outside the classroom, including:

Oakland University's School of Business Administration chapter of Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) recently won the first runner-up ranking in the 2002 SIFE USA National Exposition in Kansas City. OU finished first at the regional competition in Chicago earlier this year. This program operates in conjunction with OU's Entrepreneurship Institute, which was started with the help of a grant from Ameritech.

The Oakland University Eye Research Institute recently awarded seven \$3,000 summer research fellowships to OU undergraduates. The program provides students an opportunity to conduct independent research on vision and blinding eye diseases under the guidance of ERI faculty.

In May, the second group of Oakland University Student Research Scholars awardees were announced. As you may recall, award recipients receive up to \$1,000 to support a research project for a minimum of one semester and have the opportunity to apply for up to \$500 in travel support to present their research results at a professional conference. The Student Research Scholars program exposes undergraduates to the challenges and excitement of research. Students are selected based on their academic strengths as well as the quality, significance and potential impact of their proposed research projects.

I am also pleased to report that this fall we will be able to offer our students two more ways to enjoy the OU experience. At its June meeting, the Board of Trustees approved

two new undergraduate degree programs, which are designed to be responsive to the needs of surrounding businesses, industry and communities.

The Bachelor of Science degree in financial information systems, through the School of Business Administration, will help fill a national and regional need for university graduates capable of linking financial theory and practice through the application of information technologies.

The Bachelor of Science degree in wellness, health promotion and injury prevention, offered by the School of Health Sciences, is designed to meet future qualification and skill needs based on consultation with industry experts. The program, the first in Michigan, will enable students to choose a specialization in one of six areas including general health enhancement, interventions in wellness, complementary medicine, injury prevention, exercise science, and professional studies.

Special thanks go to the faculty and administrators in the SBA and SHS for their creativity and diligence in putting together these two outstanding programs of study.

The past year saw significant achievement outside the classroom as well. In past messages, I have highlighted student success in the performing arts and in a variety of professional clubs and affiliates. Today, I would like to mention our student-athletes' accomplishments on the playing fields and courts.

This year, the Golden Grizzlies captured six Mid-Continent Conference titles - in men's and women's soccer, men's and women's swimming and diving, women's basketball and women's softball.

Of those six teams, three made an NCAA tournament appearance - the first ever in Division I competition - women's soccer, women's basketball and softball. The softball team won OU's first game in NCAA Division I tournament play. The women's swimming and diving team also won the National Independent conference title.

Given our student-athletes success in conference and national competition, their academic performance is even more remarkable. To recognize their academic achievements, our Athletics Department this year created the Golden Grizzlies Excellence in Academics honor. More than 150 student-athletes, representing all varsity teams and first-year through senior classes, earned this honor for the fall 2001 term.

To qualify, an athlete must earn a term grade point average of at least 3.0, taking a minimum of 12 credit hours. Nine of our teams averaged a 3.0 or higher, led by women's golf (3.27), women's volleyball (3.26) and men's soccer (3.24).

To read more about the people and events mentioned in this month's message, be sure to log on to The News @ OU Web page, which in itself deserves a bit of recognition. The news site, produced by our Communications & Marketing department, was recently awarded the Award of Excellence and Best of Show honors for electronic communication

in the International Association of Business Communicators 2002 Renaissance Awards competition.

I hope you will join me in extending your congratulations and support to our outstanding faculty, staff and students as they work to bring recognition, acclaim and distinction to this great university.

Gary Russi