



Tuesday, November 14, 2000

## New director helps to internationalize OU

About 350 students and scholars from 41 nations now call Oakland University their home away from home. Sri (pronounced "Shree") Mayasandra is helping to smooth out their transition to Oakland life and promote cross-cultural understanding among internationals and faculty, staff and students.

Mayasandra started his position last August as the first full-time director of the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO). His duties include advising internationals on immigration; personal, academic, financial and cultural matters; maintaining OU's compliance with state and federal laws regarding internationals; ensuring Oakland policies meet internationals' needs; and providing OU faculty and staff with cross-cultural sensitivity training.

"Our world is becoming a small place, and we need to be accepting and appreciative of people's differences," Mayasandra says. "Internationals bring many benefits to campus, including opportunities to learn about other cultures and perspectives."

Mayasandra came to Oakland after serving as an International Student and Scholar Adviser at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Before that, he held similar positions in Raleigh, North Carolina, and worked in community development in Jamaica.

He came to Oakland to further his personal commitment to international education.

"Promotion of international education endeavors at American universities is becoming crucial," Mayasandra says. "It is essential for institutions to be able to meet the needs of the current global market.

"We're here to assist OU faculty and staff by serving the needs of internationals."

Cross-cultural sensitivity training is one way to accomplish this goal. University departments may request such training from the ISSO. The training helps faculty and staff understand American values and assumptions and cultural differences so they can serve internationals better.

One of Mayasandra's long-term goals is to provide cultural sensitivity training to public and private institutions.

Mayasandra can be reached at (248) 370-3358 or [mayasand@oakland.edu](mailto:mayasand@oakland.edu).

Oakland University is a comprehensive state-supported institution of higher education located in Oakland County, Michigan. The university has 109 bachelor's degree programs and 63 graduate degree and certificate programs. Dedicated to preparing learners for the 21st-century workplace and society, Oakland University is organized into the College of Arts and Science and the Schools of Business Administration, Education and Human Services, Engineering and Computer Science, Health Sciences, Nursing; and the Honors College.

### SUMMARY

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