

Presidential Remarks

Years of Service Recognition Reception

April 5, 2022

- It's so good to be here with you to honor the faculty and staff whose commitment to Oakland University demonstrates the type of dedication and sense of purpose that distinguishes them as leaders....
- Some may lead by standing up and letting their voice be heard....
- Some may lead quietly...
- But each of you is a leader.
- Your years of service.... 10, 20, 30 and 40 years.... qualifies each of you an example of what it takes and what it means to be truly dedicated to the values of higher education and the mission of Oakland University....
- You have seen a lot during your years at Oakland University.... and I'm sure there are things you could teach me... I hope as we return to what I hope is a post-pandemic campus that we can meet more often, and I can get a better understanding of Oakland University from many points of view, including your valuable perspective.
- When I take a broad look at those of you gathered here.... I see a faculty and staff in a portrait of dedication... and the faces of those who we depend on....
- On behalf of Oakland University, please know how much we appreciate you, and all that you've done and continue to do for us.
- Each of you is a role model in your own unique way....
- And collectively, you make up the backbone of our university, whether that is in the classroom, conducting research or working to make sure the administration of the university is as efficient and effective as it can be.
- I think of the Faculty and Staff Years of Service Recognition ceremony as the equivalent of celebrating a landmark birthday, special anniversary or the date of a significant historical event.

- From my point of view, you have made history.... And I hope you feel we are making history together.
- These occasions are a time of celebration and reflection....
 - From the university's point of view, this is an occasion when we honor those who honor the university.
 - By "honoring the university," I am referring to coming to work every day, and collaboratively creating a campus where students are inspired.... And where students succeed.
 - That is not a small task.
 - In some ways, the success of our students is our success. And our success contributes to their success.
- In each of our lives, we have unique landmarks that we pass – the points in time where we reach a milestone and celebrate a sense of accomplishment.
- I hope you think of this "Years of Service" milestone as one of your defining career moments...
- Those of us who choose careers in higher education have chosen to serve.
 - And serve you have.... For 10, 20, 30 and 40 years.
 - When you are measuring commitment in decades, then, believe me, you are not only celebrating a career, you can claim that your time at work reflects your life's purpose.
- Tonight's recipients have witnessed first-hand many fundamental changes and tremendous growth at Oakland, and many profound changes in higher education.
 - The Oakland University of 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 is starkly different than the Oakland University of today.
 - Advances in technology, the role of the Internet, an expansive range of courses and disciplines, and the changing finances of universities have brought fundamental change.
 - Yet through it all, there was one constant: Your commitment and passion for our university.

- We honor tonight's faculty and staff recipients for playing a vital role in the education of thousands of Oakland University students, who sought degrees so they could improve the opportunities in their lives.... and in their communities.
- If you wonder about your impact, please look around at the many OU graduates and students living in the region and beyond.
 - When you see or hear about an Oakland student or graduate, please know that you are playing or played a part in his or her success.
- Thank you to each recipient for your commitment to OU for playing such a key role in shaping the OU experience.
- Congratulations.... and thank you.