

Monday, February 4, 2008

## Community groups cheer their hometown champs

At every home basketball game, representatives from local community organizations are in the stands, cheering the Golden Grizzlies to victory.

The groups are invited by OU President Gary Russi through the President's Spirit Program. Thirty tickets per game, as well as refreshment vouchers, are distributed to groups in the community. The groups share the tickets with employees, clients, volunteers or members.

"I'm pleased to offer the tickets to community organizations. This is a great way for Oakland University to showcase our great basketball teams and give community members a chance to enjoy a game," said Russi, who initiated the program during the 2004-05 season. "We get a positive response from the organizations who attend."

Some of the groups who attended games include Hispanic Outreach Services, American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, HAVEN, the American Cancer Society, the Boy Scouts and YMCA.

Jaimie Tamez, youth and volunteer coordinator at Hispanic Outreach Services in Pontiac, gave the tickets to families in the tutoring program, and mentors and children in the mentoring program.

"Everyone had a wonderful time," said Tamez. "We encourage the mentors to expose the kids to new things, and this was a great opportunity. It makes the kids feel special to be able to go to a basketball game – something they might only get to see on TV if the tickets weren't provided to them."

For more information on OU's basketball teams, visit the [OU Athletics](#) Web site.

### SUMMARY

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