

THE OAKLAND POST

JULY
8

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER — 2015 —

8.48%

TUITION INCREASE APPROVED

OVER AND OUT



Tuition hike exceeds state funding cap and BOT resolves
to continue holding informal meetings in private

PAGE 8-9

thisweek

July 8, 2015 // Volume 40. Issue 62



ontheweb

After four films and a television series, the Terminator is back in action with a fifth film, which was released on July 3. Blog Editor Scott Davis shares a preview and what to watch for during the film at www.oaklandpostonline.com.



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

PREPARING FORE THE FALL // Three out-of-state freshmen, Kylee Sullivan, Zaafina Naqvi and Maddie Zack, have been welcomed to the Oakland University women's golf team this year. The first tournament will take place in August, and the girls will head to campus in August to start preparations. Read about them online!

Photo by Jason Bombaci / The Oakland Post

Submit a photo to photos@oaklandpostonline.com for a chance to be featured. View all submissions at oaklandpostonline.com



6

JAZZ BAND TAKES ON DETROIT

The Oakland University Jazz Band, led by Assistant Professor of Music Miles Brown, will perform at the Detroit Jazz Festival. This is the third year in a row that the Jazz Band has been invited to the festival.



8

HYND PROPOSES TUITION INCREASE

On Tuesday, July 7, Oakland University President George Hynd proposed a tuition increase of 8.48 percent starting in the Fall semester of 2015. The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the proposal.



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FEEDING OU THROUGH THEATRE

Two OU students are preparing for an original play, "Feed," which will be performed on campus in September. Check out the Oakland Post's interview with Anna Marck, "Feed" director and musical theatre major.

POLL OF THE WEEK

What do you think of the news about same-sex marriage?

- A** I think it's a great step in equality for all. It's fabulous!
- B** Wedding planners are about to make some serious cash.
- C** Judge Judy is about to get SO much more entertaining.
- D** I do not support this at all. America, you goofed.

Vote at www.oaklandpostonline.com

LAST WEEK'S POLL

What's been the hardest part of summer so far?

- A)** Too much work, too many classes.
22.2%
- B)** Being away from OU and my friends.
13.9%
- C)** There's nothing left to watch on Netflix, I watched it all :(
27.8%
- D)** Remembering to wear pants when I go outside.
36.1%

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

July 14, 1971

Kresge Library is added to the campus at \$1.5 million. Also added was as an addition to the Student Center, the first dorms on campus and a science building.

July 18, 2007

Student Congress President Rob Meyer spearheads monthly trips to Lansing in protest over tuition increases, following an approval of a 13.96 percent at the last Board of Trustees meeting.

June 16, 2008

The recognizable mural of OU students, which covers the walls from the bookstore to Bumpers Game Room in the lower level of the Oakland Center, was put in place, created, and applied by SFC Graphics.

— Compiled by Nick Kim, Copy Editor

BY THE NUMBERS

HOW MUCH HARDER
LIFE WILL BE FOR
ENGINEERING STUDENTS

\$1,280

the amount that engineering students will spend for 16 credit hours a semester

\$960

the additional amount an upper-level engineering and computer science student taking 12 hours a semester will spend on tuition

506

The number of coffees that engineering students could have purchased with dollars now going towards tuition

1

The number of MacBook Air laptops that engineering students could have purchased (say goodbye!)

197

The number of Firecracker Turkey Burgers from Burgz that engineering students could have purchased

Perspectives

The views expressed in Perspectives do not necessarily represent those of The Oakland Post.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Actions speak louder than words, especially for a university

We have been known to write positive editorials on OU. We have been known to support our school. Many members of our staff love OU and the things it has tried and will try to do.

That does not mean we are blind. It does not mean we are immune to the lack of transparency and fairness that still shadows much of the university's actions, as evidenced by the Board of Trustees' most recent behavior (see page 8).

In 2014-15 we featured a fair amount of coverage on a presidential search that was closed off the to public and lacking of any real transparency. The way the search was handled was upsetting and insulting to many of OU's community members.

In July 2014 George W. Hynd was selected to become OU's sixth president. He came in preaching honesty and communication and community, and it felt good. He told us the priority rests on the students, the lifeblood of this university.

"Finally," we thought. "Finally, the president acknowledges that we matter."

Yet now we feel as if our hope and good will has been betrayed.

Annie Meinberg, senior student and previous Student Body President, now serves as the student liaison to the Board, representing OU's student body in every way possible.

She said she and only

three other student leaders were invited to discuss the tuition increase one day prior to the Board's session. It was informational, she said, and they had the opportunity to speak about the changes, but they were instructed not to speak publicly on the matter until it had been officially voted on.

While she said she understands how complicated these affairs can be, Meinberg felt there was little opportunity to discuss or share her feelings.

"One day prior, there's not much they can do to change the budget," Meinberg said. "The students were not involved in the discussion whatsoever. We just get, 'Here's what it is, what do you think?'"

We understand there are processes. We understand these things are complicated. But understanding does not equal comfort, particularly when our options are not clearly communicated to us and we are left fumbling in the dark trying to find a way out.

Sometimes these changes make sense, and we realize university officials may have good intentions. But whatever those intentions are, a lack of transparency and honest interaction will result in mistrust and anger.

OU spends so much time comparing itself to other universities and those universities' students, particularly when it comes to costs

and affordability. We are wondering: What does it matter how OU compares to the rest? Competitive isn't something to strive for; affordable and desirable is.

For a university that prides itself on being "student-centered," it feels like students' actual opinions are not often taken into consideration.

The priority here should not be on where the university stands in comparison to other Michigan schools—it should be on where it stands with its students.

The priority should be on the student with multiple jobs, classes and living expenses. It should be on the student with an active life in the student groups on campus, trying so hard to feel a part of something. It should be on the student from a low-income family with few aid options, striving to be the first generation to receive that increasingly expensive paper known as a degree.

The priority should be on us, the students, and the priority should be on maintaining an open, two-way conversation with us.

OU, you have bragged to us that you are student centered. It's time to make those words into actions. Because actions DO matter, and all we see at the moment is an even higher tuition bill with no warning or discussion, and even less sympathy.

Either change your act, or change your motto from "student-centered" to "self-centered."



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The President's Report: Student Congress stays busy

Legislature plans to reform grading scale, improve campus safety, host more events

Nick Walter

Student Body President

Hello fellow OU students, IT'S SUMMER! GLORIOUS! Sorry, got a bit excited there for a moment. All kidding aside, I do hope that you're having a marvelous time relaxing in the sun (or, as the case may be, slaving away at jobs and internships, which is slightly less relaxing at times).



Nick Walter,
Student Body
President

While we at Student Congress have done our fair share of hanging out in the sun, we've also been incredibly busy. Summer for us is mostly planning events,

initiatives, etc. I'll get right to the updates.

First of all, for a bit of overall Student Congress news: the legislature elected two new senior legislators, Cassie Hock and Kyler Johnson. If you're not sure what a senior legislator does, it's roughly the same thing as the speaker of the house — a leadership and mentorship position. The legislature has also been working on plans for the upcoming year. (I don't want to steal their thunder, so to get more specifics, get in touch with a legislator and see what he/she has been up to!)

I don't mean to sound repetitive when I say that I've been meeting with various deans and departments, but since this occupies a great deal of my time as president, that's what I've been doing. I've also

been working with members of the executive board to develop long-term initiatives for students. I know, I know, that's a vague sentence, but I can't give away more details now (although the words "swag campaign" keep coming to mind, among other things...). As you may remember from the campaign, one of my biggest initiatives was reforming the grading scale to make it more consistent and realistic across OU. I'm in the process of developing a grading scale; once that's done, I'll be ready to present it to various members of faculty, staff and administration.

As I mentioned last column, one of Madison's biggest responsibilities as vice president is to work with the legislature to implement their initiatives and ideas. She's been working on this during the past month, sitting down with each legislator and helping them on their projects. She has also been planning events for Student Congress, including our annual retreat where we draft a budget

for the year.

Unfortunately, due to space, I can't talk about each member of the executive board and all the numerous projects they've been working on, so I'll just highlight a few.

Remember Rock 4 Rights, the annual event celebrating freedom that Student Congress puts on every year? We thought just having one event was getting a little old, so we decided to make it a week of events. Yes, an entire week of events celebrating liberty, free speech and other rights inherent to our existence as human beings that we hold dear. In short, it will be glorious. If you have any more questions about this, ask Andrew Laux, legislative affairs director.

For those of you who have been at OU for at least a year, you will remember the female student who was hit on the head outside Kresge last winter. A number of students then came to Student Congress and asked about campus safety and how to increase it. This year, we've

been taking a hard look at a way to do so. Let's be blunt for a moment: although OU has (relative to most universities) an extremely safe campus, even one instance of assault is unacceptable. Therefore, Sam Abbott, student service director, has been working on a way to increase safety. Again, I don't want to give away his project, so ask him for details.

Student Congress has also been working on health initiatives, getting the funding board organized, setting up the Swag Campaign, working on diversity/multiculturalism events and a lot, lot more. I'd like to elaborate, but, as always, I'm most constricted in this column by the amount of space.

If you have any questions, shoot me an email (nwalter@oakland.edu) or a text (248-818-2875) or stop by the office in the basement of the OC. Until next time, keep an eye out on the Student Congress Facebook page; some updates are coming out soon that you won't want to miss.

Grizzlies on the Prowl



"What are your thoughts on the legalization of same-sex marriage?"

— Compiled by Dani Cojocari,
Photo Editor



Paige Munroe, sophomore, nursing

"I don't have an opinion. I'm neutral. I'm happy for those who can now get married."



Larry Steffes, post-baccalaureate, marketing and biochemistry

"I'm fine with it. I don't have any position to tell people what they can and cannot do."



Shahad Ameen, senior, health sciences

"I'm not against it, but I'm not a big fan of it. I'm neutral."



Megan Eggleton, sophomore, nursing

"Good job Congress! I'm very happy that this basic human right was finally granted to same-sex couples, because they should have already had them."



Vincent Shallal, post-baccalaureate, chemistry

"It doesn't affect me. Most people think it's a church issue, but it isn't. The government and church should not be the same."



Matthew Valassis, post-baccalaureate, human biology, dentistry

"I'm cool with it. It's going to be a highly debated hot topic for years to come. I have LGBT friends, and as a devout Christian, I've come to understand and accept them. Honestly, I'm a bit disappointed in the Christian community and how they're responding. Love is love, and love wins."



Erika Barker / The Oakland Post

Chick-Fil-A was recently named America's favorite fast food restaurant. The only Chick-Fil-A in Michigan is the one at Oakland University.

America wants to 'eat more chikin'

Chick-Fil-A named #1 fast food restaurant

Melissa Deutsch
Staff Reporter

Less than a week after the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of same-sex marriage, the most outspoken restaurant chain opposing same-sex marriage, Chick-Fil-A, was named America's favorite fast food restaurant.

Back in 2012, Chick-Fil-A President and CEO Dan Cathy made headlines for his outspoken comments supporting "traditional marriage." These comments led to boycotts of the restaurant by many equal rights supporters.

Hungry Americans don't seem to mind.

The American Customer Satisfaction Index released survey results last week naming Chick-Fil-A the most popular fast food restaurant in the country. The food chain scored an 86 on the survey's 100 point scale.

This was the Atlanta-based company's first year on the list. Chick-Fil-A has over 1,900 locations in 42 states. However, in the state of Michigan, there is only one Chick-Fil-A, and it's here at OU.

Chartwells included Chick-Fil-A in their 2002 foodservice bid as a part of the Pioneer Food Court. The Oakland Center's building maintenance supervisor Richard Fekel said they thought it would be very successful here.

"Throughout the South, Chartwells found Chick-Fil-A to be an extremely successful campus food concept" Fekel said. "As a result it was believed the brand's popularity would be successful at Oakland. It quickly grew in popularity with students, staff and campus visitors."

It has become so popular that it's currently undergoing construction to become a full service Chick-Fil-A.

According to Fekel, the restaurant draws many customers outside of the Oakland University community.

"Due to the lack of the popular restaurant in Michigan, some patrons familiar with it drive long distances to dine at our Chick-Fil-A," Fekel said. "For example, last summer I spoke to an individual who drove from Flint just to dine at our Chick-Fil-A."

Joining Chick-Fil-A in the top 10 favorite fast food restaurants in America is another Pioneer Food Court member, Subway. Papa John's did come in at number four on the list, however, Chartwells said goodbye to Papa John's this year.

Top 10 Favorite Fast Food Restaurants

1. Chick-Fil-A - The Oakland Center
2. Chipotle Mexican Grill - The Village of Rochester Hills 84 N Adams Rd, Rochester Hills, MI 48309 2.6 Miles
3. Panera Bread - Campus Corners Shopping Center 37 S Livernois Rd, Rochester Hills, MI 48309 4.6 Miles
4. Papa John's - 1101 East Walton Blvd, Pontiac, MI 48340 3.1 Miles
5. Pizza Hut Rochester Hills Plaza Shopping Center, 1360 Walton Blvd, Rochester Hills, MI 48309 4.3 Miles
6. Dunkin Donuts - 600 S Opdyke Rd, Pontiac, MI 48341 4.8 Miles
7. Subway - Oakland Center
8. Domino's - 121 E University Dr Rochester, MI 48307 5.4 miles
9. Little Caesars 3020 Walton The Village of Rochester Hills Rochester Hills, MI 2.7 Miles
10. Starbucks - 2546 N Squirrel Rd, Auburn Hills, MI 48326 .2 Miles

Alumni plan on Havana good time

Kevin Teller
Campus Editor

Discovery is a large part of what Oakland University offers to students who yearn for it and thrive upon it. In an effort to further this experience, the OU Alumni Association has announced multiple Cuban cities, including Havana and Sancti Spiritus, as destinations for a Grizzly Getaway trip this winter.

Many would say that the introduction of new cultures, art, and people is an integral part of what college is about, and right now is an opportune time to make such a trip.

Since a speech made to the American people in December, President Barack Obama has been open about the efforts being made by the United States and Cuba to restore diplomatic relations. As these talks continue, many find it beneficial to learn more about Cuban culture.

In the informational brochure that the OUAA has released, the range of cultural sites and experiences go from meeting with official representatives to walking through a local food market and interacting with Cuban residents

"Together we'll encounter the true heart and soul of this colorful country by engaging with the diverse, inspiring people who call it home," alumni and community engagement director Sue Helderop wrote.

Cuban-American student Jessah Rolstone has been to Cuba 10 times over the course of her life. Her father immigrated to the US as a teenager, and their family has traveled there to stay with relatives in Havana.

"The Cuban people are lively and colorful," Rolstone said. "Talk to people and try to learn about their stories and life in Cuba. Traveling there is an experience you cannot get in any other country."

While relations are steadily improving between the two nations, getting permission from the US government to travel to Cuba is still certainly required. According to the OUAA, a Cuban visa and Cuban departure tax are also required, costing approximately \$100 together.

Excluding these fees, the trip cost is \$5,499 per person. Travelers will depart on Feb. 25 and return March 4. For more information on this trip visit www.oualumni.com.



Photo courtesy of Carly Uhrig

The Oakland Jazz Band is recognized as "one of the premier university jazz ensembles in the state of Michigan."

Let the music move you

Oakland Jazz Band to perform at Detroit Jazz Festival in fall

Rachel Williams
Staff Intern

The Oakland Jazz Band, under the direction of Assistant Professor of Music Miles Brown, will return to the Detroit Jazz Festival (DJF) for the third year in a row.

The festival was created in 1980 by Robert McCabe and the Detroit Renaissance. Currently, the DJF is produced by the Detroit International Jazz Festival Foundation and is hailed as the "world's largest free jazz festival," according to their website.

Stretching from Hart Plaza to Campus Martius, this marks the festival's 36th year, and will feature over 100 acts on five different stages. The Oakland Jazz Band will perform on the Waterfront Stage at 12:45 pm on Sept. 5.

The festival gives students real-world application of their performance technique, and holds them to higher stand-

ards of precision and musicality.

According to Brown, the festival attracts approximately 50,000 individuals per year and gives students the chance to perform alongside some of the musicians of whom they are fans.

Brown finds the festival to be just as rewarding to an educator such as himself, in that he has "learned something new [each time] about what works and what doesn't work."

The endless process of learning is a common theme at the festival as they largely focus on music education in Detroit, allowing high school and college bands to perform among the likes of Pat Metheny (artist-in-residence at the festival for 2015) and the Ron Carter Trio. The collaborative effort of a band leads to a "deeper appreciation for the music, and [will] bring this enthusiasm to the people in their current and future lives," Brown said, whether or not the students choose to pursue music in a professional capacity.

Erik McIntyre, junior and guitarist in the Oakland Jazz Band, sees this deeper appreciation for music applicable in

his own life as he hopes to continue to play and create music beyond graduation. This will be McIntyre's first year as a part of the jazz band's performance at the DJF, and imagines he will be able to "connect with new people and deepen [his] motivation to keep learning and loving this music."

Beyond music appreciation, McIntyre is hoping to learn more about the technical and physical aspects behind playing a large festival. The jazz band has played a pivotal role in McIntyre's life as he transferred to Oakland in order to pursue a jazz minor. Since joining the program, McIntyre says he has learned the importance of improvisation and theory.

"It's allowed me to dig into some of the puzzle pieces of jazz language and what it means to improvise within a group," McIntyre said.

Molding and encouraging, the jazz program at Oakland continues to challenge students with real-world application of their knowledge in the form of performances such as the DJF. The setlist is still in the works, but the Oakland Jazz Band is confident as they prepare for this festival.

Queer Peers at OU strengthens and unites

Rachel Williams
Staff Intern



Society is harkening a new civil rights movement. Recently, publicity surrounding popular media figures such as celebrity personality Caitlyn Jenner and actress Laverne Cox has increased awareness of those who do not fit into a normalized heterosexual orientation.

As society begins to embrace this shift, OU's own Gender and Sexuality Center is making strides to include and encourage these minority members in their transition to college life through their Queer Peers Mentoring Program.

For those who do not know the acronym LGBTIQA, when broken down, means lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex, queer (or questioning) and asexual.

The Gender and Sexuality Center focuses on the LGBTIQA community as well as the women of Oakland University. As seen on the GSC's website, the center hosts various events including Take Back the Night, the Vagina Monologues, National Coming Out Day and Pride Week.

Grace Wojcik, MPA Coordinator, Gender and Sexuality Center & Center for Student Activities & Leadership Development, sat down for an interview to discuss the Queer Peers Mentoring Program and its effect on OU students and staff.

Wojcik explained that the Queer Peers program was created in 2008 under the name of LGBT Peer Mentoring. Wojcik stated that the program "was the first of its kind in the state of Michigan," encouraging the LGBT community within university life. She went on to explain that mentors are paired with "mentees" with between three to five pairs per year since its creation.

Mentors meet with their respective students at least once a month (though more face-to-face interactions

are encouraged) working through various modules in the Queer Peers workbook, including "getting to know you" supplements.

These supplements are a module concerning coming out and the process that goes along with that, resources for these students, as well as modules to foster academics through goal setting, etc. Mentors within the program stick with their pairing throughout the academic year, and it has fostered personal, relational, and academic growth for participants.

Wojcik expanded upon how the program benefits not just the LGBTIQA Oakland community, but the greater student body. She explained that the program "fosters leadership" to its participants, who "have gone on to take on different leadership roles on campus."

The program also creates greater social awareness and respect for our fellow students. While heterosexual people cannot be mentors because firsthand experience with the coming out process is crucial to the program, they can be trained as Allies and attend S.A.F.E. training on campus. This is done to bolster greater open-mindedness and inspire further social change.

Students can also attend the numerous social events that the GSC holds as mentioned above and check out the organization's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/GSCatOU.

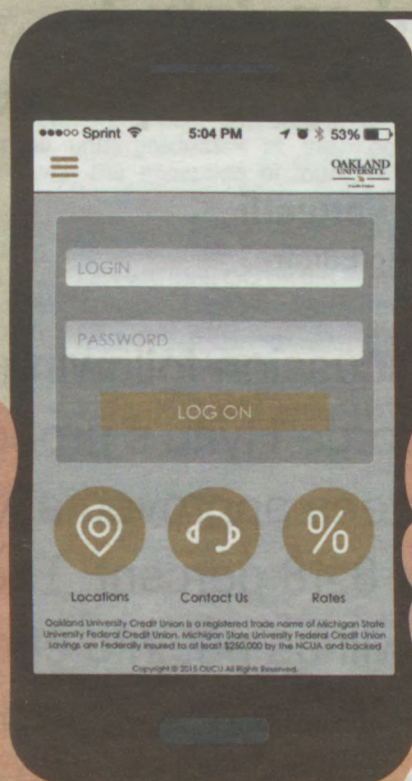
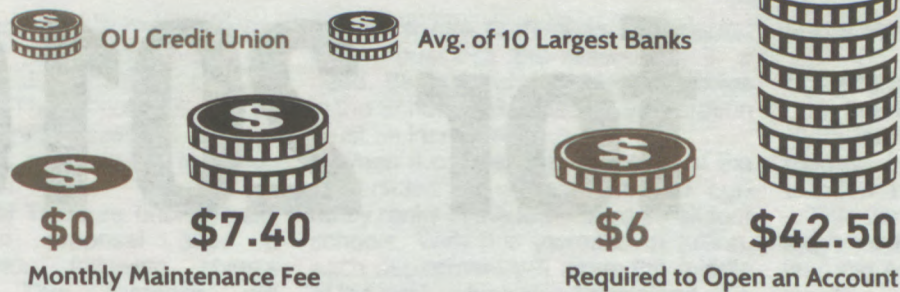
Those interested in getting involved can find applications on the GSC's GrizzOrgs page.

THE OU CREDIT UNION STUDENT GUIDE

See why OU Credit Union is the smart choice for every OU student. For everything from low cost and fees to on-campus ATMs and 24/7 mobile access, OU Credit Union fits into every stage of student life and beyond.

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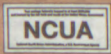
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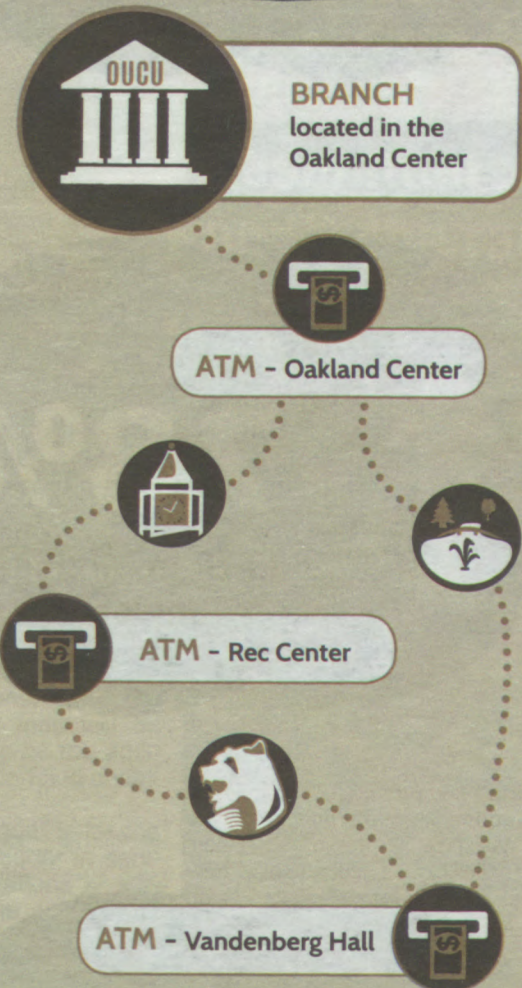
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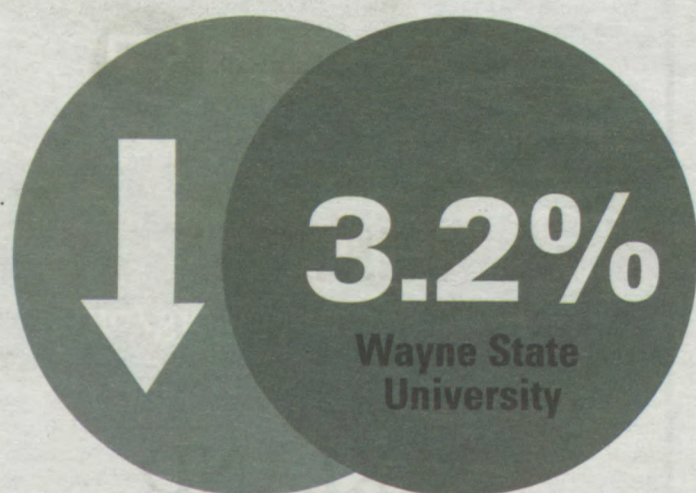
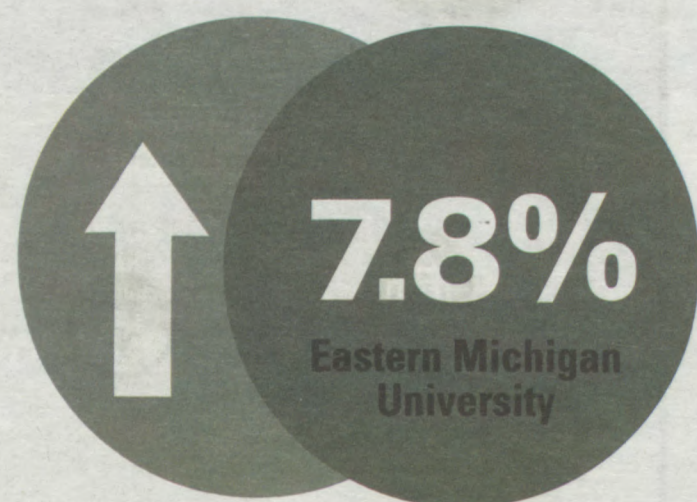
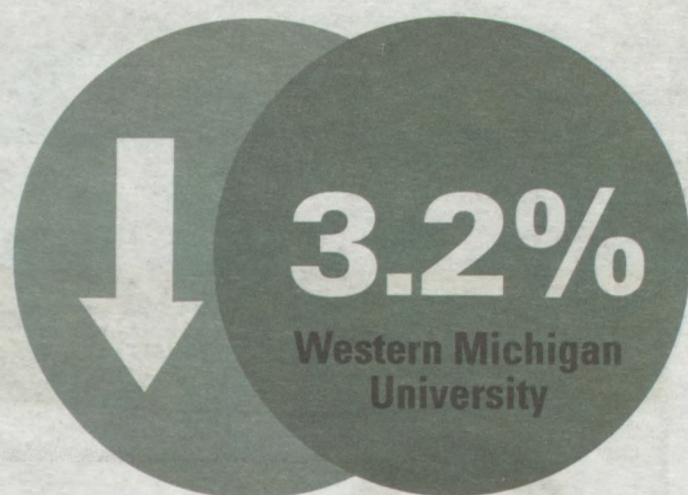
Tuition spikes for 2016

An across-the-board increase was approved on July 7, raising tuition by 8.48 percent.

By Kayla Varicalli
Managing Editor

After a brief discussion following President George Hynd's proposal, the Board of Trustees approved a tuition increase of 8.48 percent. The increased prices will be put into effect beginning with the fall 2015 semester.

The university sacrificed its state aid of \$1.2 million, where it will see a profit of \$12 million from tuition increases.



To acquire state funding, universities must stay at or under a 3.2 percent tuition increase. Here's a comparison of local universities' 2016 tuition increases and their standing with the state cap.



Danielle Cojocari / The Oakland Post

Oakland University President George Hund addressed the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, July 7. Hynd proposed a tuition increase, which was later approved, for 8.48 percent.

An across-the-board tuition increase was approved on Tuesday, July 7, for the 2016 academic year. The proposal, issued by Oakland University President George Hynd, provided an increase in tuition for 8.48 percent.

The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the proposal after a brief discussion following Hynd's presentation. This increase will add \$30 per credit hour to resident undergraduates starting in the fall 2015 semester and lasting until a new proposal presented next summer.

Separating tuition by school

The accepted proposal increased tuition for all undergraduates at the same rate, with the exception of four schools.

The School of Health Sciences will see a \$10 to \$20 differential increase per credit hour. This will rank OU as the sixth cheapest School of Health Sciences program for lower level classes in Michigan out of 12 universities.

The School of Business Administration will see a \$20 to \$30 differential increase per credit hour. They will then rank as the fifth cheapest program for lower level classes out of 15.

The School of Nursing will experience a \$25 to \$35 differential increase per credit hour. This will rank them as the fifth cheapest program out of 12.

The School of Engineering and Computer Science will see a \$30 to \$40 differential increase per credit hour. This will rank them as the sixth cheapest program out of 13.

These four schools will experience increased tuition raises because of their extra need for equipment and classroom experience.

The School of Engineering and Computer Science, the School of Nursing and the School of Health Sciences require expensive lab equipment and materials. The higher individual tuition costs will help to offset this rising cost, according to Hynd.

The School of Business Administration

must hire professors in a market where business professors are in a need. Because of this, faculty salaries in the School of Business Administration must be increased.

When it comes to the ranking of the universities by department, OU currently ranks in the lower third for all four schools. With this increase in tuition, each department will move the middle of the pack, which Hynd explained as a desirable place to be.

"We're doing all of this to improve the quality of this institution," Hynd said.

The risk of violating state cap

By increasing tuition to 8.48 percent, OU violated the state cap rule of 3.2 percent. This cap means that the state will provide the university with \$1.2 million if their tuition increase is at or under 3.2 percent.

By violating this cap and increasing by over five percent greater, OU will not receive the state aid. In return, though, the university is looking at \$12 million from the increased tuition prices.

With universities submitting tuition changes across Michigan, Eastern Michigan University proves most comparable to Oakland's hefty increase.

Eastern Michigan University increased its tuition by 7.8 percent in June, just under OU's increase percentage.

Wayne State University and Western Michigan University announced tuition raises of 3.2 percent, which are equivalent to the state cap. These universities will profit little in tuition from students, but will receive the state aid.

Over the last three years, OU has not increased tuition more than four percent. Raising it nearly another five percent this year, the university hopes to make up for lack of state funding.

"In 1972, we were getting 82 percent from the state for funding," said John Beaghan, Oakland CFO. "It has more than flipped since then and we need to account for that."

OU is the least-state funded university per student, falling just behind Grand

Valley State University.

Spending the increases

In the Board of Trustees meeting, Hynd laid out a plan for spending the money come fall. The university looks to follow a strategic plan of three steps.

The first strategic goal is to foster students through a robust teaching and learning environment, said Hynd in the meeting.

To accomplish this with the new budget, faculty counts will be increased to decrease the student-teacher ratio. Also, there will be changes made to the handicap accommodations and an increase in psychologists and advisors.

The second strategic goal focuses on the coverage of the university as a research and scholarly environment.

To further this experience for students, library collections, teaching spaces and specialized labs will be increased. There will also be the addition of new research support and equipment.

Hynd's third strategic goal is for the university to become a leader in serving the needs and aspirations of surrounding communities, he said during the meeting.

To increase community engagement, money will be spent on enhanced career services and internships, which includes a partnership with the city of Pontiac.

Topping the list of improvements and expansions, the Oakland Center will seek additional renovations after the tuition increase. Though changes won't be seen right away, the impact on students of a new Oakland Center can be worth it, according to student liaison Annie Meinberg.

"This tuition increase is a hard hit at first," Meinberg said. "But the expansion and renovations in the Oakland Center has been a need that's been here for years."

The new tuition prices will be in effect for the fall 2015 semester. With a \$30 per credit hour increase for undergraduates, increased financial aid opportunities will be presented.

Resolution under the radar

By Kaylee Kean

Editor-in-Chief

In addition to the tuition increase, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution "supporting that only formal sessions of the Oakland University Board of Trustees be open to the public."

This was quickly passed at the July 7 meeting. It will allow the Board to hold "informal" sessions that are closed off from public view and participation.

The meeting's agenda, located at www.oakland.edu/bot, introduces this resolution by briefly discussing Michigan's House Joint Resolution (HJR) O, which seeks to further clarify how Michigan's institutions of higher education keep meetings open to the public. Michigan's constitution has currently phrased that "formal sessions" shall be open to the public, but HJR would have this amended to the more general "meetings".

"Whereas, in fulfilling its mission, the Board encounters many issues that need to be discussed, at least in part, out of the public's view to encourage the candid and free exchange of views or to protect sensitive and competitive information," reads part of the resolution. It also states that the inability to meet in private informal meetings would have a "deleterious effect on the Board's ability to provide effective governance" of OU.

The Oakland Post will develop a more thorough story on House Joint Resolution O, Michigan's constitution, and how OU's Board of Trustees fits into this legislature — look to www.oaklandpostonline.com this week for more.

the mix

didyouknow

Did you know? We didn't feel like looking up a random fact that no one will read, because we are lazy and apathetic. What is your favorite strange or fun fact? Share it with us on our Facebook page!

— www.facebook.com/theoakpost

The views expressed in The Mix do not necessarily represent those of The Oakland Post.

SEVEN NEW WAYS TO PAY FOR TUITION

We're sure you've seen at this point, but OU's done it again — raised tuition like it does every year (yet we're still surprised). This summer's spike was a little higher than normal and hit hard where it hurts, so we thought we'd help by providing a few useful ways to pay your loyal and considerate school its dues.

1. USE YOUR CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD! Beginning in August, your card payments will be made through a third-party processor, and will add a 2.75 percent convenience charge. Makes sense — credit and debit cards ARE convenient, after all!

2. PAY IN CHANGE. Change is everywhere — in your couch, in your car, in your pockets, in the drive-thru, on the floor, like, everywhere, in the change jar in your great-uncle's horrendously warm and smelly bedroom — everywhere. Take some time to scour the lands and gather those coins. Keep it all in a dusty old sack to add to the effect, and bring it to Financial Aid only when you've gathered enough to cover your tuition. (It might take a while, but never give up!)

3. LINK TO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT. It's easy, quick and efficient, and won't cost you any extra fees.

4. KICKSTARTER. People are suckers for that stuff, right? Just say something like, "Please, I am relatively poor and need money to go to school. I'm more important than these other projects and people and would really, really appreciate it. I'll send you a selfie for every \$100 you donate." They'll lap it up like the donating dogs they are.

5. WRITE A NOVEL, MAKE A MOVIE, OR JOIN A BAND AND GET FAMOUS. Classic get-rich-quick route. You're chock full of talent; time to put it to good use.

6. BECOME OBSESSED WITH INVESTING. It's super simple to get into and rewards very quickly. Plus it will make you look really smart, and maybe one day people will pay you more because they think you're a super intelligent business/money guru.

6. WORK. A LOT. Already have three jobs? Don't worry, you can still make time for a fourth! With careful planning, lots of caffeine and a complete disregard for mental and physical health, you can do anything you set your mind to. (Just make sure at least one of those jobs pays more than minimum wage.)

7. DON'T! Just let those late fees pile up, and when you have what you came for, just make like our state funding and disappear. They'll never find you again, and boom — free classes!

YAKS of the WEEK

Yik Yak:
The voice of the people



1. "Working on my thigh gap, but my balls keep getting in the way."

2. "Had a little girl tell me she wanted to look just like me when she grew up. Why. Why would you wanna look like ME."

3. "Whenever I get lonely, I remind myself that I'm a part of the world's largest 4G LTE network."

4. "I like to plan out conversations in my head... when people don't stick to the script it upsets me."

5. "I bought new shoes from a drug dealer. I dunno what he laced them up with, but I've been tripping all day."

6. "The last 70 Miss Universe winners have been from Earth. Seems fixed to me."

7. "Check engine light turned off today. Just goes to show if you ignore your problems long enough they go away."

8. "Does anyone else have that one bra that makes them feel like a beautiful sexy mermaid cause same."

9. "I accidentally messed up my life, how do I start a new account?"

10. "Just slapped a statue's ass... Guess I've officially hit rock bottom."

TOP TUNES

wxou albums of the month

1. Unknown Mortal Orchestra — "Multi-Love"
2. Girlpool — "Before The World Was Big"
3. Dawes — "All Your Favorite Bands"
4. Hot Chip — "Why Make Sense?"
5. Thee Oh Sees — "Mutilator Defeated At Last"
6. My Morning Jacket — "The Waterfall"
7. Surfer Blood — "1000 Palms"
8. Pins — "Wild Nights"
9. Juan Wauters — "Who Me?"
10. Ceremony — "The L-Shaped Man"



My Morning Jacket - "The Waterfall"

On their seventh studio album, Kentucky's finest rockers deal with loss of love and subsequent rebirth on "The Waterfall."

"I hope you get the point/

The love is gone," Jim James sings on "Get The Point," a tender acoustic ballad, bidding a lover farewell over a delicate fingerpicking pattern. The song shows off a softer side of the band; a gentle refrain from their usual southern, psychedelic rockers.

Themes of heartbreak and healing continue. "Thin Line" and "Only Memories Remain" are the songs of James looking in a rearview mirror as he drives away from a broken romantic situation. "Cuz it's a thin line/Between loving and wasting my time," James croons in "Thin Line," grappling with the decision to stay and suffer or leave and endure the lonely first moments of being single again.

The anthem-ready rockers and hillbilly harmonies that MMJ are known for are still here. Opener "Believe (Nobody Knows)," "Compound Fracture" and "In Its Infancy (The Waterfall)" show the band at their biggest in terms of sound. A festival band at their core, these new songs will make the transition from the studio to the stage with ease.

Recommended if you like: Band of Horses, jam bands, using the word "trippy."

Start with: "Compound Fracture", "In Its Infancy (The Waterfall)", "Get The Point."

— Anthony Spak, WXOU Music Director

www.oaklandpostonline.com

From the page to the play stage

Students adapt novel for the stage to share message of technology and the future

Anthony Spak
Life Editor

Two OU students are preparing an original play that will see life on stage this September on campus. Titled "FEED," the play is based off of a novel of the same name by M.T. Anderson but has been adapted for the stage by playwright and OU student Garrett Markgraf.

The Oakland Post spoke with director and musical theatre major Anna Marck about the pair's upcoming project.

1. What is the premise of "FEED"?

Feed tells the story of Titus and Violet, two teenagers living in a future society where devices called "feeds" are implanted into the human brain. The feed works as an advanced technological system that gives the user any type of virtual reality they want: television, social media, entertainment, news, shopping, video games, and much, much, much, much more. Feeds are a way of life in the future in the same way that cell phones are a way of life now. But the feed takes it to the next level by literally getting inside of your head. The show not only explores the battles we face in maintaining our own identity against the suppressive nature of technology, we see the trials and tribulations of teenage love through Titus and Violet's eyes. The show is funny, it's dramatic, it's scary, it's sad, it's profound; it really hits on the whole spectrum of human emotions.

2. Is this the first time you've directed a play?

I have directed many different scenes, musical numbers, and a few one-acts in high school and college. A few years back, I even directed a short music video for a competition. But this is the first time I have directed a full-length play.

3. How did you and (playwright) Garrett Markgraf meet? Have you worked together before?

The two of us are in the musical theatre program here at OU. The theatre program is such a family that at this point, Garrett and I are like siblings. We have worked together a lot, both in shows and in classes. We actually have an amazing working relationship because we can be completely honest with each other at all times. You don't always get that.



Photo courtesy of Anna Marck

For more information on "FEED" or to donate, visit www.kickstarter.com/projects/1848722701/feed.

4. On the play's \$2,500 Kickstarter goal:

At this point in time, 20 people have pledged over \$1,200 (almost half of our goal). We are getting more and more people pledging every day! It's amazing. The support that we have had from people in the community who are interested in the project and just want to help us share our story is unreal. I feel very lucky. Our deadline is July 19, 2015.

Kickstarter made sense for us because it is an easy-to-use platform that most people have heard of. It's easy to share via email and Facebook and we loved that we could give "rewards" to our backers—things like two reserved seats to the show for donations of \$25 or more. One of my favorite rewards that we have is a hand-drawn rendering of the set of Feed, by our lighting designer, Jason Maracani, who is quite a talented artist.

5. What is the LAB Theater?

The Lab Theatre is a black box theatre in Varner Hall on the first floor. It seats about 65-70 people.

6. Where does the cast practice and how often?

The cast will begin rehearsing at the beginning of August in The LAB and we will rehearse M-Th for about 3-4 hours per day. We will only rehearse for a few weeks, then the show opens September 4. We have just four performances September 4 at 8 p.m., September 5 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and September 6 at 2 p.m.. The show will be a part of Opening Weekend activities and it's free admission so we are hoping to draw a crowd from new OU students as well as our more consistent theatre patrons.

7. Other than money, what are some of the struggles of putting on a play?

There is so much that goes into putting on a play from the costumes, makeup, sound, lights to the tempo at which an actor enters the stage. All of it is hugely important to the message that the audience takes away. It's very detail-oriented work. As the director, I am always asking myself, "Is this choice contributing to telling the story the way we want to tell it?" And if it's not, we try something different.

I often think of theatre like an iceberg. 90% of all of the hard work and effort from rehearsals is under the surface and the audience only sees the 10% above the water... But hopefully, if you've put your time in and really done the work, that 10% that they see is amazing.

This particular play offers a whole new set of struggles because it has never been seen before. Most shows take years to write and months of previews with lots of changes and editing along the way. We do not have that luxury. So along with all of the normal challenges of putting on a play, we are constantly improvising and making brand new discoveries and choices. We are essentially blazing a completely unblazed trail, which is scary, but also extremely rewarding.

8. Are you involved in the Department of Music, Theater and Dance? Is the play attached to MTD?

Yes. Everyone involved in the production from the cast to the designers are Oakland theatre students. The play is attached to MTD, but no one is taking class or getting credit. And no one is getting paid. All of us are simply doing the show because we are passionate about the story and want audiences to see this work.

9. What do you hope the audience will take away from "FEED" after seeing it on stage?

There are many different messages of the show and I think each audience member will bring their own experience and take away something different. But I hope that everyone thinks about their own relationship with technology after watching the show. In no way is Feed a sermon to get people to stop using their cell phones. Heck no! But it does draw a line and ask us to think about "Where does the technology stop and where do I begin?"

The United States of Change

Grizzlies react to same-sex marriage

By Anthony Spak // Life Editor

On Friday, June 26, our country's ban on same-sex marriage was lifted by the Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision. 14 couples challenged bans in four states, Michigan being one, in our nation's highest court and now same-sex couples can legally marry in all 50 states.

"The right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty," reads the syllabus for the case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*. "Same-sex couples may exercise the fundamental right to marry."

Since the ruling, OU students and faculty have responded with their thoughts on one of the most talked about Supreme Court decisions in recent memory.

Justyn Frink, senior communication major and president of the OU forensics team, was pleased with the decision and saw it as a springboard for further legal action.

"Gay rights are human rights and human rights are gay rights," Frink said. "With the gay community now able to marry it is only a matter of time until the other rights fall into

place."

"It was a long time coming," says Grace Wojcik, faculty advisor for the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at OU. "I never thought the day would come just 10 1/2 years after Prop 2 (the Constitutional Amendment prohibiting same sex marriage in 2004) passed in Michigan."

Other than a shared Facebook status on the day the verdict was announced, the GSA has not publicly reacted to the news.

"While GSA hasn't made an official response, many of the members are happy with the news," Wojcik said.

"I don't think that the decision will have any impact on OU students," said Student Body President and political science major Nick Walter. "I do think, though, that the decision should have been left up to the people in democratic elections, not handed down from on high by an unelected and unaccountable Supreme Court."

Professor Jo Reger, director of the Women and Gender Studies program and head of the new LGBTQ - lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning - minor, has focused many of her studies and writings on social movements. Reger sees the decision as a result of decades worth of LGBTQ social movement.

"I would argue that today's increasing acceptance of LGBTQ people is partially the result of the social movement strategy of coming out," Reger said. "As more people come to know LGBTQ folks, the opposition to their rights has lessened."

Being able to put a ring on it, however, is far from the end of the fight towards equal opportunity for the gay community.

"Marriage is only one right amongst many that are needed," Reger said. "In many places in the U.S., LGBTQ people still have no

protection from discrimination in employment, housing, health care, etc."

Reger cites a handful of other issues that are up to bat following the marriage ruling.

"There are still a lot of items on the agenda: transgender rights, immigration issues, employment and housing discrimination, continuing to address HIV and AIDs to name a few," Reger said. "The movement is already beginning to focus on other issues. Same-sex marriage is not the end of the movement."



Oakland University has been known to have a supportive community, as it's home to organizations like the Gay Straight Alliance. The GSA hosts quite a few supportive events and groups, including the annual Drag Show, pictured above.

The future of the flag

By Melissa Deatsch // Staff Reporter

America's most recent tragedy in Charleston, South Carolina took place on June 17, when a man opened fire in a historical black church, killing nine African Americans. The event has served as a spark for a variety of political debates, particularly the growing debate on racism and guns.

A less predictable debate began after investigations into the confessed killer, Dylan Roof, revealed pictures of him with the Confederate flag. Rallies formed in South Carolina's capital, demanding the flag be removed from the capitol grounds. The state's Senate has since spoken with a 37-3 vote in favor of removing the flag off of the capitol grounds, according to the Associated Press. The flag will be lowered and placed in the state's Confederate Relic Room. Retailers such as Amazon and Walmart have also banned the sale of any Confederate flag merchandise.

Shortly after Roof's identity was released to the public, a website in his name was discovered. The website, entitled The Last Rhodesian, has text explaining in some detail his racist thoughts and provides insight into what led Roof to the church that day.

"I have no choice," he writes. "I am not in the position to, alone, go into the ghetto and fight. I chose Charleston because it is most historic city in my state, and at one time had the highest ratio of blacks to Whites in the country. We have no skinheads, no real KKK, no one doing anything but talking on the internet. Well someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me."

The entire text on the website is unsettling and the pictures show him burning the American flag and holding the Confederate flag. The event in Charleston begs the question: what does the Confederate flag mean now?

Erin Dwyer, a history professor at Oakland University specializing in 19th century American history, particularly the history of slavery and the Civil War, says the meaning of the Confederate flag has changed over time.

"Originally it was the battle flag of the army of northern Virginia," Dwyer explained. "It was only seen waving at a Civil War reunion or on a gravestone. It wasn't until the 20th century that it starts to take on another meaning."

Dwyer explained that in the 40's and 50's the flag could be seen waving at college football games — it was a way for southern students to express their opposition to integration.

With this change of meaning to the flag, people eventually started to wonder what business it had flying atop the State House in South Carolina. Opposition claim that it condones the mentality of white supremacy.

"A flag that flew over a nation that was created (to support) slavery does not belong flying (on government grounds)," Dwyer said. "It's a way of saying these are government supported ideas."

Supporters of the flag have argued that the flag represents southern pride rather than white supremacy and argue that it is a significant part of U.S. history.

Former Atlanta Mayor and African American Andrew Young said in an interview with Fox 5's Morse Diggs that the "challenge for us is not to wipe out our past but to learn to live together in the future."

While much of the issues regarding the Confederate flag are taking place in the South, the debate has spread across the nation.

"Most importantly, I think, as a historian, the biggest thing is the conversation that's happening around this and what the flag means," Dwyer said. "That conversation is valuable even in places where the confederate flag isn't flown."

Candidate catch-up

By Kaylee Kean // Editor-in-Chief



The Association of Black Students, one of many supportive groups on OU's campus, actively protests and speaks on national issues. Read previous coverage on our website.

With the recent social/human rights changes that have rocked the political world, other changes have come. Presidential hopefuls have been publicly announcing their candidacies, and while the election is far from close, the primary campaigning has begun with gusto and the roster is packed.

Just in case you haven't been able to keep up with the candidates for President Barack Obama's successor, here is a quick list (in no particular order):

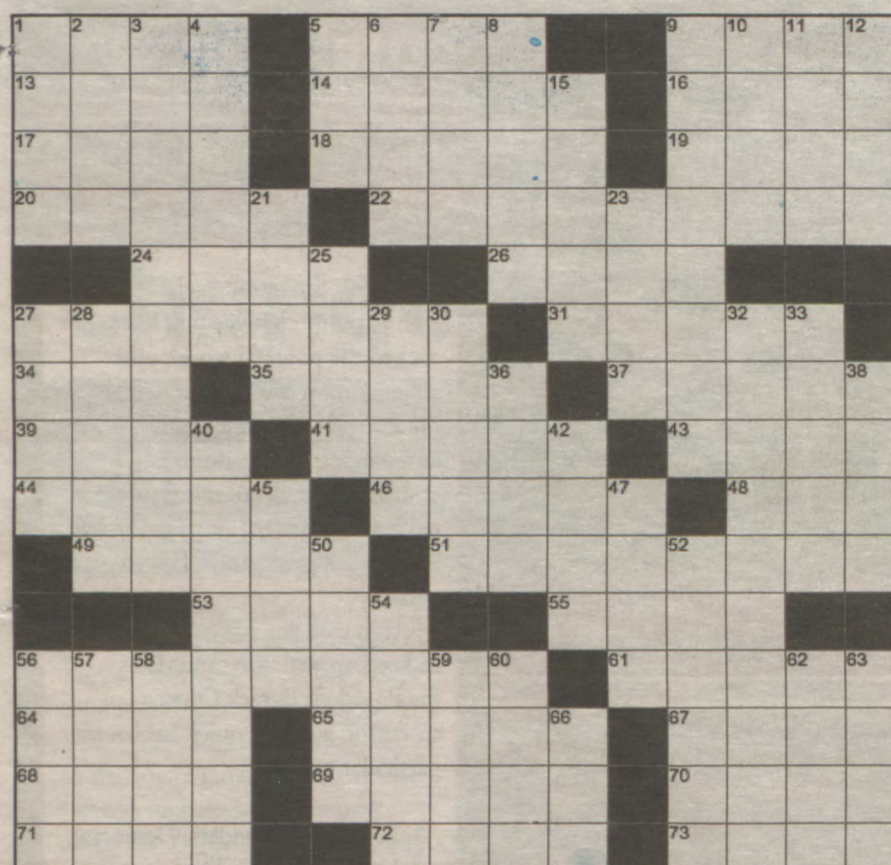
1. Sen. Bernie Sanders, Democrat
2. Hillary Clinton, Democrat
3. Jim Webb, Democrat
4. Martin O'Malley, Democrat
5. Lincoln Chafee, Democrat
6. Ben Carson, Republican
7. Gov. Bobby Jindal, Republican
8. Jeb Bush, Republican
9. Sen. Ted Cruz, Republican
10. Carly Fiorina, Republican
11. Sen. Lindsey Graham, Republican
12. Mike Huckabee, Republican
13. George Pataki, Republican
14. Sen. Rand Paul, Republican
15. Gov. Chris Christie, Republican
16. Rick Perry, Republican
17. Sen. Marco Rubio, Republican
18. Rick Santorum, Republican
19. Donald Trump, Republican

Dr. David Dulio, chair of the political science department at OU, and OU students have weighed in on the candidates so far — read these opinions and a more detailed summary of the race so far at www.oaklandpostonline.com.

Photos from The Oakland Post archives

Designer: Taylor Reyes

Puzzles



Across

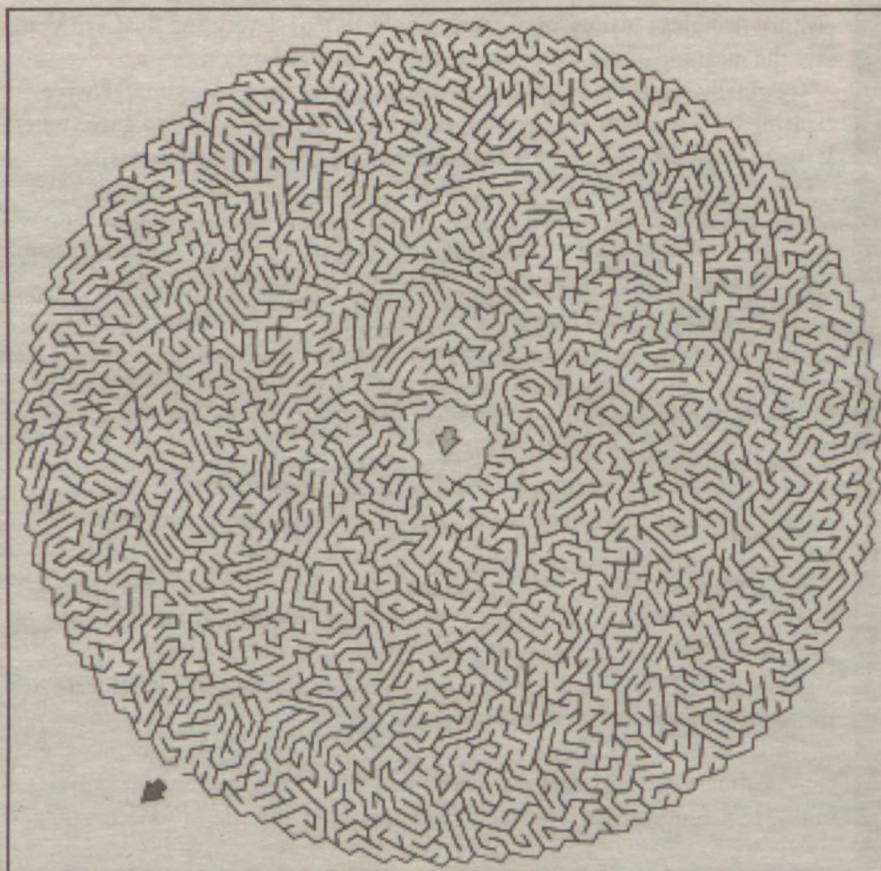
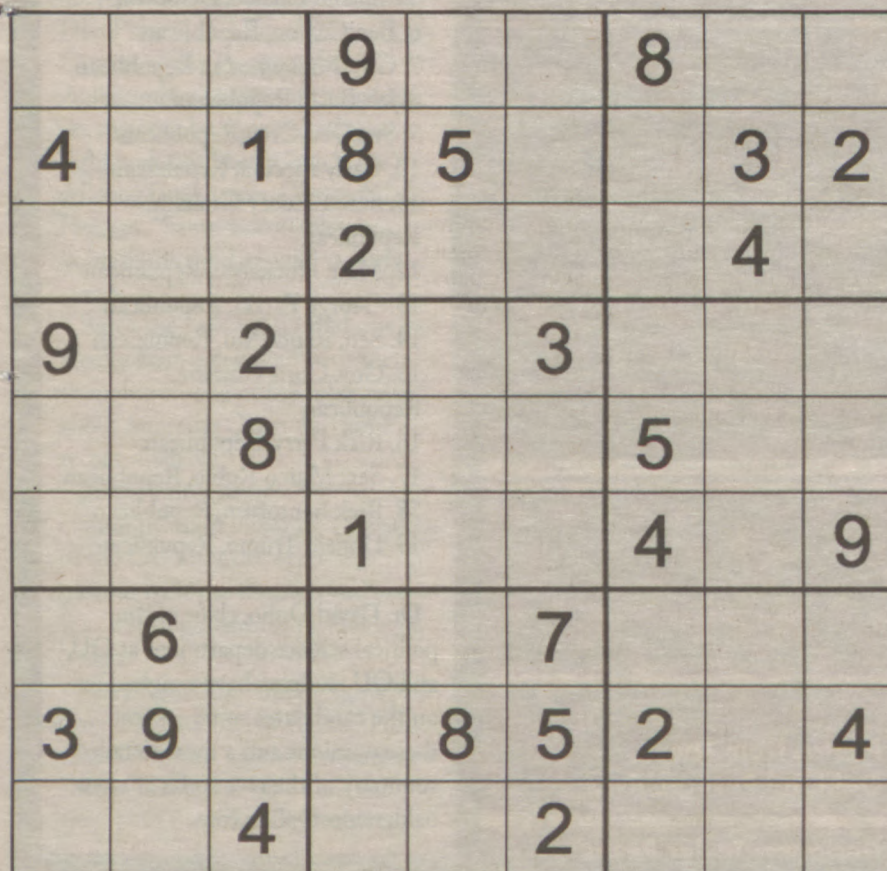
- 1: PC software
5: Sobbed
9: Piece of water sport equipment
13: Butler, for Gable
14: Outermost community
16: Large pitcher
17: Peachy
18: Kind of candle
19: Home of heroes?
20: Flaw
22: Marx/Engels creation
24: Where to see the alphabet float
26: Either of the racing Earnhardts
27: Fledgling businesses
31: Send payment
34: Have stuff
35: Puts away
37: Wash-off tattoo
39: More of the lament
41: Symbolized, with 'for'
43: Art ____
44: Safety device
46: Whiskey cocktails
48: Important
49: IHOP freebie
51: Possessions (and a tax)
53: Very little bit

- 55: Dixie bread
56: Central
61: Developer's land
64: Filet mignon source
65: Seasoned rice
67: Gumbo vegetable
68: Give the slip to
69: Skiing area
70: Bracelet bit
71: Lose traction
72: Do a spit take
73: Units of work

Down

- 1: Cumbersome boats
2: Browning of pages of verse, for example
3: Humorous remark
4: Highest in rank
5: Moisten
6: Course climax
7: Cocoon's contents
8: Pollster's detection
9: Cashed in
10: Knocks for a loop
11: Had an opinion
12: Group of three
15: Prickly shrub
21: Brownie pieces
23: Got out of Dodge
25: Positions

- 27: Scatters seeds
28: Nincompoops
29: Flower sites
30: Attack like a hawk
32: Vessel for Arctic conditions
33: Unspoken
36: Acidic
38: Sluggish
40: Made unfeeling, as a heart
42: Word following eye or nose
45: Happy cat's sound
47: Position
50: Sneaker ____ (British electropop group)
52: Attire
54: Prepares water for JELL-O
56: Misfortunes
57: Quiet spot
58: Not finalized, legally
59: Sow's sustenance
60: A runner may break it
62: Mountain goat's perch
63: Insignificant amounts
66: Not very many





Oakland University Archives

Athletes get involved in charity work in the community and make a difference through a number of organizations.

Grizzlies make a big impact

OU athletics gives back to community

Katlynn Emaus
Staff Intern

In addition to defending conference championship titles in multiple sports, OU athletics holds more than meets the eye. Community involvement and charity work are core values of every OU team.

"We perform any number of annual community service projects; I try to plan these according to our players' interests, as well as university and athletic program directives," head women's volleyball coach Rob Beam said. "This year, we have adopted a player through Team IMPACT and am spending time with her and welcoming her into our family."

From a coach's point of view, these service projects attempt to expand the worldview of their athletes, as well as display the impact they can have on someone's life, explained Beam.

However, assistant swim coach Shawn Kornoelje has a personal tie to community work.

"For me growing up we were on Welfare, Aid for Dependent Children, they called it," Kornoelje said. "So when we have a chance to make that difference, show we care about others

around us, it makes it personal to me."

From an athlete's point of view, service is an opportunity to better the community surrounding them and to bring the team closer, explained junior Aaron Helander, a member of the men's swimming and diving team.

"I get involved to make sure that I am making the most of my college experience," Helander said. "I love meeting tons of new people and seeing doors open because of what I am involved with. It also makes life fun, I enjoy everything that I am involved with and wouldn't want it any other way."

One major way the swim team gives back is through a 12-year-old boy named Devin Wolbert, who has a heart defect that prevents him from participating in sports.

The Oakland swim team signed Wolbert to be a part of OU family. The team attended his birthday party and other family gatherings too.

The most memorable moment I have was when Kyle Larson and I went and surprised Devin after his doctor appointment," Helander said, "And seeing him cry tears of happiness, that is something I will never forget about."

Every charity work stands out in its own way and leaves a last-

ing impact, Beam stated.

"The two that stand out to me are seeing the 'sea of pink,' and feeling the emotion of breast cancer survivors and advocates, walk past the finish line for the first time at the Three-Day Walk," Beam said. "As well as meeting the home owner of the house that we were building in Pontiac and having her shake each one of our hands."

At the annual Mitten Toss basketball game, the swim team was ready to give 700 pairs of gloves and mittens to kids who needed them. Then, something memorable happened to Kornoelje involving a simple pair of gloves.

"I gave a small boy a pair and told him on three we were going to throw them as far as we can," Kornoelje said. "He un-balled the gloves, put them on, clapped his hands and showed me the gloves. Then walked away with a huge smile on his face."

Many colleges require athletic teams to participate in community work. At Oakland, it isn't seen as a chore, but rather an opportunity to better the metro-Detroit area.

"I think it is important for our program to work with our community partners," Beam said. "A great sport program, or athletics as a whole, is a positive force that can influence individuals and communities."

Valentine's Day at OU

Men's basketball team welcomes new assistant coach

Jackson Gilbert
Staff Reporter

From 2009 to 2013, the Oakland University men's basketball team consistently put on the floor its best lineups in the school's history.

All-time greats for the school including Johnathon Jones, Keith Benson, Will Hudson, Larry Wright, Reggie Hamilton and Travis Bader all took the court over those four years.

The common denominator for those four years was Drew Valentine, frequently described by head coach Greg Kampe as "one of the best leaders I've ever had." According to Kampe, Valentine brought the team together as a family.

Valentine graduated from Oakland in 2013, finishing with an 87-52 record and winning the Summit League title and qualifying for the NCAA tournament twice over his four years of play. Now he's back at Oakland University wearing a different outfit.

It was announced last week that Valentine would return to Oakland as an assistant coach, replacing the departed Darren Sorenson.

Valentine spent the previous two seasons as a graduate assistant at Michigan State, under the nationally recognized Tom Izzo, while also getting to coach his younger brother, Denzel.

"Oakland is one of the best and most underrated programs around," Valentine said during an interview Monday.

"MSU is a little more on the national level than Oakland," Valentine said. "Izzo is about as respected of a coach as there is in the country. Seeing it and experiencing the grind every day taught me a lot about how to run a program."

He intends to bring that mentality to Oakland.

"When I was here before,



Jackson Gilbert / The Oakland Post

Valentine has played 136 for OU and finished fourth in all-time defensive rebounds, and eighth in offensive rebounds.

we got after it," Valentine said. "I didn't really take days off. We pushed each other and held each other accountable."

He emphasized the family mentality that the team had during his four years. He said he still connects regularly with Bader, Hamilton, Jones and others from those teams.

Valentine said his favorite memory at Oakland was the week of the 2011 Summit League championship and the subsequent NCAA tournament game against Texas.

"It's something you dream of, watching basketball your whole life, being able to cut down the nets," he said.

With regards to his new program, coach Valentine has big plans.

"This is the most talented team since my sophomore year here," Valentine said. "If we can stay together and hold each other accountable, and have good leadership, we will go far."

Valentine talked a lot about the emerging leadership of junior point guard Kahlil Felder, saying that he believes Felder has the potential to be an All American and lead the team to an NCAA tournament bid.

His long-term goals are lofty but Valentine has proven to be tenacious.

"My goal is to be a head coach," Valentine said. "I'd love for it to be here. I have a vision for what I think is the perfect program and hopefully one day I can make that happen."

Enhancing the fan experience

Athletic department hones focus, celebrates and builds on recent success

Kristen Davis
Sports Editor

The 2014-15 athletic year was historic for the Golden Grizzlies.

From winning five Horizon League tournament championships, to receiving an all-sports trophy for the first time in the 40-year history of athletic competition and even leading the league for the fourth straight semester with 125 student-athlete honor roll selections, success came on a variety of levels.

The Grizzlies had over 85 games streamed on ESPN3 and every home men's and women's basketball game aired on local television. The Grizzlies also appeared on SportsCenter's Top 10 plays more than once.

Not only does the Oakland University Athletic Department want to continue that success, but it is also proactively working towards fulfilling a variety of other aspects.

"This is my eighth year here, and we've never had a year like this," Senior Assistant Athletic Director of Public Relations Scott MacDonald said. "I mean obviously our student-athletes did a tremendous job, but we had a huge shift in culture."

That shift in culture is something Director of Athletics Jeff Konya brought with him when he first arrived at Oakland in August of 2014. Since his arrival, he's led the way for the recent changes and adjustments made by the department.

"We are focused on the student-athlete experience as a driver in our decision-making process," Konya said.

"If you combine that thought with the new 'Ethos' and focus on our process of how we do things each and every day, the results will come and the results will be in a better position to be sustained."

Out with the mission statement, in with the ethos

The Ethos of Oakland University Athletics were recently created in place of a mission statement. MacDonald said this was done partly because mission statements are quickly outgrown.

"One of our major hallmarks is to be limitless where anything and everything is possible in Oakland Athletics," Konya said. "Having a belief statement, or an ethos statement, is



more concerned with the means of getting there as opposed to the ends. It just fits our new culture better."

First-class, knowledge, innovative, forward-thinking, efficiency, positive attitude, maximum effort, welcoming environment and relationship-oriented are the keywords in the ethos, and they can be found printed on the walls in the athletic office in the O'rena.

MacDonald said the ethos are at the center of the department talks now.

Improving the game day experience

Enhancing the game day experience for both student-athletes and fans is another area of focus, and the new lighting and sound renovations in the O'rena will enhance both.

The new LED lights will double the current light levels on the court and allow Oakland to meet NCAA Tournament standards, according to MacDonald.

"We're going to have the ability to have the lights on the court, dim lighting around the concourse and the stands and turn our lights off for the pregame, so it's really going to amp up that game day experience," MacDonald said.

"More importantly, it's going to help our student-athletes and give them a better experience. It's going to help our broadcast as well."

Renovating the sound system was a

top priority, especially since the special events held in the O'rena required the university to rent speakers. With the new system, those additional costs are eliminated.

The new HD sound system will not only strengthen public address and presentations on the video board, but it also will make microphone and pre-recorded media messages easier to understand.

MacDonald said that the new lighting and sound, along with the dance and cheer teams and the increased interaction with Grizz Gang and the band all enhance the game day experience for both the athletes competing and the fans watching.

Increasing fan involvement

Getting more fans involved is another area the department has focused on.

When Konya first arrived at the university, he invited key constituents from the university, student-athletes, key donors and others who cared about Oakland to the O'rena for an open discussion of ideas and suggestions for the department.

"There are a lot of constituents around the Oakland Golden Grizzlies, and they have passion, ideas and interest in always improving the current state of affairs," Konya said. "We found great symmetry between what we heard and what we believed, and I think it is why all of our changes

worked so well and were so universally applauded."

The fan interaction increased with the "Wear the Bear" marketing campaign, which was created after the open meeting. The phrase in its entirety is "See the bear. Be the bear. Wear the bear," and the phrase has sat well with the university and its students.

After the department forged a partnership with Postano Social Media Hub, people could begin using the hashtag "Wear the Bear" in their posts on social media and those posts would appear on the Golden Grizzlies website or the big screen during games in the O'rena.

Fans also were able to vote for the new court design during the 2014-15 basketball season. The black top court was completed in April, and the new design received national spotlight through features on ESPN, Yahoo! Sports, Sports Illustrated and the Washington Post, among others.

The department also concentrated on getting students on campus to embrace athletics more.

"That's something we've kind of been lacking in athletics, as much as we've tried to get the students to come out," Konya said. "We spent more time in the Oakland Center, we spent more time in the dorms, we spent more times doing socials where we just invited everybody and I think that helped us get the support we needed from the students."

Maintaining transparency and momentum

Moving into the future, the department wants to maintain the transparency they've created with both the fans and the student-athletes and build off the momentum gained after the successful year.

MacDonald said getting to know student-athletes and educating them about what the department does is something they staff in the athletic department is going to spend more time doing in upcoming years.

"Before, we all had a job to do. But then you get a change with the president and you get a change with the athletic director and they both have the same ideas and it's really kind of taking off here," he added.

"Now the key is, keep the momentum going. The hardest thing to do is repeat, and it'll be a tough task for our student-athletes, but I think they're up for the challenge."