

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: AMID INTENSE NATIONAL DEBATE, OAKLAND REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO DEI

June 30, 2023

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision on Thursday to strike down the race-conscious admissions program at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina poses a significant challenge to college campuses around the country.

The decision has rekindled strong feelings from those who opposed Michigan's passage of Proposal 2 in 2006, which disallows affirmative action as a programmatic means to recruit underrepresented minorities.

Oakland has never used quotas or race as factors in admissions. Our success in creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus comes from a firm and unequivocal commitment to the principles of DEI. This commitment is evident in a multi-level experience that enriches students, faculty, and staff, and expands horizons, cultivates empathy and understanding, regardless of socio-economic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

At Oakland, we have proactively woven a vibrant tapestry of various cultural and ethnic backgrounds into the fabric of our campus life. We strive to build a community where every member can learn and appreciate fundamental similarities and differences.

Our commitment to fostering a diverse student body has led us to champion educational opportunities for all. We work tirelessly to educate and empower students, faculty, and staff to improve their cultural competencies. We strive to ensure that everyone feels valued, welcomed, and has a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, we've advanced DEI by focusing on college preparedness programs that specifically serve economically disadvantaged communities, providing them with a strong platform for academic success.

As a result of these endeavors, the percentage of first-generation and underrepresented students at Oakland has increased. Our commitment to DEI has resulted in the following composition of this year's incoming class:

- 36 percent first-generation students
- 26 percent of students from underrepresented minority backgrounds (African American, Hispanic, and Native Americans)
- 16 percent African American students

Although many of us are very disappointed by the high court's decision to strike down race-conscious admissions, at Oakland, we are committed to provide accessible and affordable education that leads to greater opportunities and upward mobility to all students.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.

Oakland University, President

Glenn McIntosh, Senior Vice President

Student Affairs & Chief Diversity Officer