

ANNOUNCING THE OU COMMUNITY CHANGEMAKER CHALLENGE

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

Colleagues,

Strategic Vision 2030 calls on us to further elevate Oakland's excellence by serving as a preeminent steward of place. Today, I am excited to announce an important step forward with the OU Community Changemaker Challenge — new grants designed to support bold projects that engage students and help solve real-world problems in the communities we serve.

Through the Office of the President, we will award two, two-year grants of up to \$200,000 each. The projects should tackle on-the-ground issues and meet community-defined needs — whether expanding college access, improving literacy, strengthening health or addressing other priorities. These projects might focus on geographic communities or communities based on shared characteristics. Ultimately, the Challenge is about helping to address or solve problems our communities face, spurring research and strengthening OU's impact as a steward of place.

The submission deadline is Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026, and I encourage you to bring forward your most innovative ideas and collaborative partnerships for creating lasting impact. To learn more, please visit the [Community Changemaker Challenge webpage](#), which has more details about the proposal requirements and timetable, with more information coming soon.

I am proud of how Golden Grizzlies lead the way in community engagement. Through efforts like our [OU-Pontiac Initiative](#), we are already advancing education, health, civic engagement, the arts and workforce development. We have the potential to do even more to enhance the vitality and prosperity of our local communities. These challenge grants will enable us to build on our strong foundation and strive even higher as we help uplift and empower our communities.

Sincerely,

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President