

Monday, April 20, 2009

Successful Campaign for OU celebrates early conclusion

By **Katie Land**, news editor

The first-ever capital Campaign for Oakland University has marked a successful conclusion by reaching its goal a full year early. A total of \$111,843,187.93 was raised for "Innovation and Opportunity – The Campaign for OU."

Celebrations were held for faculty, staff and students on April 15 and donors were recognized at a black tie gala on April 17.

"Four years ago we announced a lofty campaign goal of \$110 million and an intent to reach that goal by 2010," Vice President for University Relations Sue Goepp said. "We have reached our goal one year ahead of schedule and together made a difference for our students and faculty. This is truly a shared achievement and one that we should all take time to celebrate."

Oakland University President Gary Russi expressed immense pride in and appreciation for the many supporters who came together to make the campaign experience an unqualified success.

"I think this is a historic moment in the history of this university," he told faculty, staff, students and donors during a campaign celebration. "There is no question, you and the campaign have made a difference."

These funds will touch virtually every part of campus by creating new scholarships, establishing research endowment funds and making new professorships and faculty chairs available, as well as improving and updating classroom, laboratory and building space on campus and completing the naming of Pawley and Elliott Halls.

Marta Bauer, a student in The Honors College and a grateful recipient of university scholarships, said the generosity of contributors gives the recipients a chance to transform their lives in more ways than academic. She noted that they are also able to make new friendships, acquire new perspectives on any number of issues, learn important life skills and find ways they can give back to their communities.

"By offering scholarships, donors are offering something that goes far beyond dollars and cents," Bauer explained.

A total of 45 endowed scholarships, 36 research and program endowments, two endowed chairs, two professorships and four lecture series were brought in by the campaign. It helped create the new writing center in Kresge Library, establish new academic programs, encourage additional study abroad and nursing programs through enhanced scholarship opportunities and more.

"The campaign has supported our efforts to achieve our 2010 Vision to be a distinctive university that prepares students with a broad base of knowledge and top-notch intellectual and experiential opportunities," Russi said. "The support of our community of faculty, staff and students has made Oakland's commitment to excellence a reality."

Co-chairs for the campaign were Susan Cischke, Ann Nicholson and Dennis Pawley. More than 6,800 new donors were brought to Oakland and nearly 2,000 new alumni provided financial support.

"With fewer and fewer state resources, it becomes ever challenging to add high quality programs, world-class faculty and improvements to infrastructure so that we can continue to evolve as a university of distinction," Russi said. "As we look to the future, we are in a strong position to continue our success and to build on our current momentum and to plan for our next campaign."

For more information or to give to OU, visit the campaign Web site at www.oakland.edu/giving.

SUMMARY

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