

Monday, December 7, 2009

Father and daughter celebrate a shared OU graduation

By **Katie Land**, news editor

Father and daughter Bob and Melissa Mele will mark a special milestone this December. Together, they will graduate from Oakland University with a doctorate and bachelor's degree.

A physical therapist for more than 30 years and instructor of physical therapy at Macomb Community College, Bob will receive his Ph.D in Educational Leadership at the ceremony, while Melissa has just completed Oakland's newly accredited Wellness, Health Promotion and Injury Prevention bachelor's program.

The duo is expecting a big family turnout for their graduation ceremony and celebration.

"It's quite exciting for us," Bob said. "We are at two different stages in our lives and it was a wonderful experience to blend them together at Oakland University."

When she first began her college career, Melissa chose a business program at Western Michigan University. After the first year and a half, she knew it wasn't for her, and found the right fit in the WHP program at Oakland.

The move brought her back home and provided a focus for her studies. Bob made the transfer easy by showing Melissa around campus. The pair frequently studied together in the library and stopped in the Oakland Center to meet for lunch.

"I am really proud of my dad," Melissa said. "Getting a Ph.D is awesome at any age. It was fun to go to school with my dad, and not a lot of people can say that. We both motivated each other to keep going."

This fall, Melissa intends to follow in her father's footsteps and pursue a physical therapy doctorate. While still in the application process, her Oakland degree and internship at the Older Persons Commission in Rochester has already raised some eyebrows.

"I have always spent time volunteering and working at hospitals, and that's what drew me to physical therapy," she said. "I enjoy being active and helping older people."

An Oakland education runs in the family for the Meles. Brother and son, Robert graduated with an OU bachelor's degree in December 2005.

The upcoming graduation represents an important step forward for father and daughter, and they look forward to sharing it together.

"Going back to school will open up many opportunities for me in my career," Bob said. "We are very happy and very pleased to have been able to accomplish this together."

Oakland's commencement ceremonies take place at the O'rena on Saturday, Dec. 12.



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SUMMARY

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