

UNITING URBAN ACHIEVEMENT AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

*Oakland University and The Pontiac
Community Coming Together*

Year in Review 2014-15

WHY PONTIAC? WHY OAKLAND?

Vision statement

A sustainable, mutually beneficial relationship between Oakland University and the community of Pontiac

Mission statement

The Oakland University Pontiac Initiative is advancing the vitality of Pontiac while enhancing experiential learning opportunities for Oakland students. The initiative supports faculty research and promotes civic engagement in the community. In addition, it calls upon a broad network of individuals and organizations to achieve these goals by using appropriate infrastructure, human and financial resources.



WHY NOW?



I welcome this opportunity to join Mayor Waterman in thanking everyone involved in our renewed and revitalized partnership with the community of Pontiac. As I have said many times, our work in Pontiac is vital in realizing our commitment to becoming a preeminent metropolitan university. More importantly, it provides the opportunity to enhance the lives of our students, faculty, staff and members of the Pontiac community.

In early November 2014, approximately 150 people gathered at the Welcome Missionary Baptist Church to simultaneously ask, what can Oakland University do for Pontiac, and what can Pontiac do for Oakland University? The rich variety of answers to these questions created the foundation for a truly reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationship. Subsequently, four task forces were created to address a variety of needs and opportunities that are described elsewhere in this publication.

During the past year we have also come to appreciate the work that was already underway in Pontiac including the involvement of Oakland students and faculty at the Baldwin Center and the extensive Healthy Pontiac project.

I look forward to the continued growth of this very promising and important partnership.

It is truly the right thing to do.

— **George W. Hynd**
President, Oakland University



On the 1st year anniversary of this remarkable partnership, I am delighted to look back over the achievements of the past year. It has been my great pleasure to work with President Hynd and the many members of the Oakland University faculty and staff who have contributed their expertise and best efforts to galvanize this partnership. It has also been gratifying that so many Pontiac thought leaders, educators, supporters and ambassadors of the community have helped to shape the vision and outlook for Pontiac's engagement in the process. Together, we have made great progress toward our goal of creating a multi-faceted, reciprocal partnership that will significantly enrich both the university and the Pontiac community.

Several important initiatives have emerged from the aspirations shared by the many attendees who participated in the two well-attended town meetings held last year. I personally enjoyed working with the interns from the Schools of Political Science, Public Administration, and Journalism. The School of Business has provided an excellent opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs to explore business opportunities. The College Readiness Task Force is providing needed math support to middle school students and developing plans for a Parent University. As a trained health care professional myself, I recognize the ongoing involvement of the Medical School, through its student & faculty, to better the health and wellness of our citizens and I look forward to developing still more initiatives to further mobilize their commitment in this cause.

These accomplishments are outstanding – and this is just the beginning. With the continued concerted co-operation we can sustain and continue to expand upon this very promising partnership.

— **Dr. Deirdre Waterman**
Mayor, City of Pontiac

PARTNERSHIP: YEARS IN THE MAKING

Project Upward Bound

A federally funded program designed to give teenagers in Pontiac, Oak Park and Ferndale support up the ladder to high school graduation and beyond through study skills, college prep classes, career skills and development and tutoring.

Pontiac Oakland Symphony Orchestra

A partnership started in the 1970s between the Pontiac/Oakland Symphony and OU. The orchestra provided OU students with a professional performing experience, and OU offered educational programs including ensembles and concerts in the Pontiac schools and Oakland County through the activities of the Symphony.

1960s

1970s

1980s


Pontiac Black Cultural Center

OU donated \$20,000 for the center, run by Pontiac volunteers. OU professors also taught freshmen exploratory courses in the humanities and sciences.

Short Term Teacher Training Program (ST3P)

A partnership between the School of Education and Pontiac public schools to expand the pool of future teachers to non-education majors (funded under the Michigan Educational Professional Development Act). The program condensed an education major into two semesters of work and teaching. Participants split their days between teaching in elementary and junior high target schools and class hours with educators from OU and the Pontiac school system.





Entrepreneurship Summer Camp

Twenty-two high school students from Pontiac attended the School of Business 2008 and 2009 two-week summer camp.

Future Nurse Leader Academy

A partnership between School of Nursing and Herrington Elementary School to prepare students early for a future in health care. Students learned nursing basics and obtained CPR and first aid training and certification.

1990s

Success by Six

A partnership between the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Education and the Pontiac school district to address the developmental needs of at-risk children.

Eisenhower Dance Ensemble

A Pontiac - OU MTD collaboration. OU dance faculty and advanced dance students collaborate on productions.

2000s

Today

Both partners are looking forward to continued collaboration.

Currently, Oakland University is a key sponsor of the 2015 Pontiac Holiday Extravaganza and Mayor Waterman will be speaking at the 2016 Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine commencement ceremony.



A RELATIONSHIP RESTORED

In the fall of 2014, approximately 150 representatives from Oakland University and the Pontiac community met at the Welcome Missionary Baptist Church to reinvigorate the longstanding connection between the University and city, focusing on establishing a positive, reciprocal relationship to mutually benefit both OU and Pontiac. With the intention of maintaining the relationship for years to come, participants developed task forces, establishing realistic goals and timelines in four specific areas: college readiness, economic development, service learning and communication. Below are some of the projects, outcomes and goals that were established at this event.

COLLEGE READINESS (CO-CHAIRS: PATRICIA DOLLY AND ROSIE RICHARDSON)

- In the summer of 2015, Pontiac seventh graders attended the AVID/OU Summer Institute where they lived on campus, learned vital pre-algebra skills, enhanced their writing skills and experienced campus life.
- In October 2015, approximately 40 seventh graders began a similar project conducted on five successive Saturdays.
- Planning has begun for a “Parent University” project designed to help parents understand how they can best support their children throughout their school years.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CO-CHAIRS: MICHAEL MAZZEO, HUBERT PRICE AND MICHELLE BOSAU)

- The School of Business Ideas to Business (I2B) program was seen as a way to simulate development of new businesses in Pontiac. Approximately 80 people participated in a business startup seminar in August 2015. The department agreed to work with up to seven business startups, and three local banks have expressed interest in supporting these projects. Applications have been submitted and are currently being reviewed.

“When I first came to OU, I put a painting of Woodward Avenue down the middle of downtown Pontiac in my office as a reminder of where we are at Oakland University and what we are doing to continue to build that relationship. I think it’s of utmost importance that Oakland University is a steward to its region.”

— **Kevin Corcoran**, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences



“This is important because it’s absolutely the right thing to do. It’s truly a reciprocal relationship – it serves the needs of our students and the needs of the city. I hope that in the future, we can establish a genuine, sustaining relationship between OU and Pontiac, like Grand Valley has done with Grand Rapids.”

— **C. Robert Maxfield**, Special Assistant to the President and Provost for the Pontiac Partnership



SERVICE LEARNING (CO-CHAIRS: DAVID DULLIO AND DAVID BOWMAN)

- Nine interns from the Political Science Department were placed at city hall during Summer 2015. They were engaged in a number of important projects related to city administration and urban governance.
- Three more interns from the Journalism Department worked with Mayor Waterman to publish the first Spirit of Pontiac newsletter in June. The second issue was published in late October.
- Building on these internships, the task force committed itself to creating a framework for student engagement in the Pontiac community. Recognizing that this might take many forms, committee members made the decision to replace “service learning” with the broader term “experiential learning.”

COMMUNICATIONS (CO-CHAIRS: NICOLE WELLS-STALLWORTH AND DAWNAREE DEMROSE)

- The goal, purpose and mission of the communications committee is to communicate information in a way that prompts people to action and increases connectivity between stakeholders.

“It’s a full-circle thing for me, in essence. For years when I was working at the Oakland Press and editor of the paper, we covered so much bad news. Now, to be able to come back and be involved in this project, I feel like we’re actually doing some good. Mayor Waterman obviously deeply cares about the community and if I can help her spread the good news about the city, then that makes me very happy.”

— **Garry Gilbert**, OU Director of Journalism, Spirit of Pontiac Coordinator

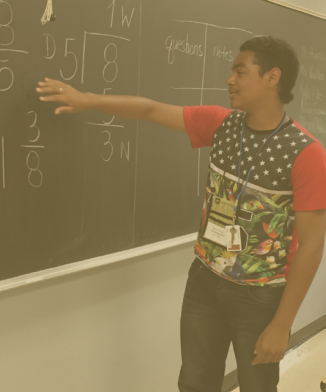
“Pontiac is a major city of Oakland County and has long been the city that supported its wealth. With the disappearance of its industrial base, people have had to rethink how to make the city viable. It’s a challenge we face all around the world. [In the future] I hope to see a much more coordinated effort in the grassroots organizations and strengthen the capacity of people to create new forms of caring for each other.”

— **Shea Howell**, OU Professor



“Pontiac has a bad stigma attached to it. That’s kind of upsetting considering it is so close to where I live and go to school. I don’t understand why Pontiac is viewed in a negative way. After working for the city for a number of months I still cannot understand because so many wonderful things are happening. Yeah nothing is perfect, but for the most part the city should get the credit it deserves. I hope to see the city thriving. I hope the negative reputation gets wiped away from the city.”

— **Shaqela Chapman**, OU communication student, City Hall intern



"When I was an OU student, much of my practical experience came from working in the city. Fast forward to now and all of that has been wiped away because of the financial stress the city is under. The future of this project is unlimited. Pontiac, in its healthy condition, has opportunity for every level of study for every student, and a pipeline of energetic young people is just what Pontiac needs."

— **Judge Leo Bowman**, Oakland County 6th Circuit Court Judge

"I got into the Initiative as a Masters of Public Administration student and got to see how the city actually works as opposed to just reading about it in the classroom. I am a former resident of the city – I grew up here, went to school here, and it's very important to me to see it come back. I think that employers and organizations who see that [Pontiac] is backed by Oakland University will be more willing to settle here."

— **Taleesa Anderson**, OU MPA student, Mayor's Office Intern



JOINING FORCES

While the 2014-2015 town meetings did much to reignite the partnership and generate momentum for the future, several projects were already underway and others began to take shape independent from the task forces' initiatives.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY WILLIAM BEAUMONT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

In Fall 2015, medical students from Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB) worked in teams to teach one-hour health lessons in Pontiac classrooms. OUWB has also engaged with the Baldwin Center, Grace Centers of Hope and Oakland County Homeless Collaborations.

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

While the OU engineering-related outreach in Pontiac has dated back to 1990, in Summer 2015, the School of Engineering and Computer Science connected with the Welcome Missionary Baptist Church in Pontiac to create a customized STEM-based hands-on, project-based space camp that included activities for 52 children including topics such as astrophysics, rockets, comets and more.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

High school students explored the World of Business last summer in a five-day camp, learning about the fundamentals of a business education, leadership in business, the global business environment, accounting, economics, marketing, operations management, management information systems, human resources management, and finance. In November 2015, Pontiac High School students attended a leadership conference focusing on careers in accounting.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

An undergraduate literacy teaching methods course is being taught at Baldwin Center. Students in the class work with Baldwin's afterschool programs to develop lesson plans and provide data to the center's directors on the children's reading levels and other assessments.

In Fall 2014, the SEHS/Pontiac Schools Collaborative Center opened at the Whitmer Human Resource Center. This has proven to be an excellent meeting space, currently utilized by graduate courses.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Faculty members worked with the Pontiac Public Library to plan a series of events celebrating literacy, creativity and the freedom to read by focusing on the classic novel *Fahrenheit 451*.



"I think with [the Pontiac Initiative] there's great opportunity for OU students to have career-changing, life-changing experiences. I hope to see the institution more involved with the city, the partnership continue to blossom and our students continue to benefit from the experiences available in Pontiac."

— **Dave Dulio**, OU Associate Professor and Chair, Political Science

"[OU students working in Pontiac Schools] is really bi-directional. Our teachers and undergrad students love it; it's authentic and more effective because they're creating things they're actually using in the real world. And by doing it in afterschool programs in primary schools in an urban environment with high needs populations and different cultural and religious backgrounds, it allows cultural growth among our teachers. On the flip side, we're also able to provide valuable support and service to the Pontiac community."

— **Tanya Christ**, OU Associate Professor, Reading and Language Arts



The Department of Social Work has placed students in various agencies in Pontiac, a protocol which will be used as a template for other schools in the University.

The Department of Music, Theatre and Dance hosted a concert for Pontiac elementary students last winter with plans to host additional productions.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

A three-year, \$1.95-million grant will fund a citywide approach to making Pontiac a healthy, vibrant place to live, work and play. For example, a six-week soccer program combined efforts to provide no-cost, non-competitive, physical activity with the Meet Up and Eat Up program that provides free meals to anyone under the age of 18 during the summer months.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Clinical nursing placements continue at St. Joseph's Hospital. In addition, planning is underway for Certified Nurse Assistant program and other programs to be housed in downtown Pontiac.

HONORS COLLEGE

Currently, many students complete their freshman year service requirement at various sites in Pontiac.

OU STUDENT ACTIVITIES

In September 2015, OU Student Government hosted 36 students from Pontiac High School and Pontiac International Technology for a daylong leadership workshop. The Pontiac students, members of their high school student councils, took OU Student Congress office tours, participated in ice-breaker activities and took part in a memorable event planning exercise during the day's activities. The students' advisers were thrilled with this opportunity and reported that they plan to make it an ongoing tradition.

The Center for Student Activities and Leadership development encourages volunteerism in Pontiac and many other places. The annual Make a Difference Day programs regularly bring dozens of student volunteers to Pontiac.

AMERICORPS VISTA VOLUNTEERS

Oakland University, through Michigan Campus Compact and the Michigan Nonprofit Association, received the AmeriCorps VISTA grant for six of the last seven years. In the interest of increasing our capacity for working with Pontiac, the University sought and was awarded two full-time VISTAs to serve one-year terms assisting in academic service learning, economic development, communications and college readiness initiatives in Pontiac.

LOOKING AHEAD



All parties involved in this partnership are committed to ensuring its successful future. In September 2015, Mayor Waterman hosted approximately 35 leaders from Oakland University and Pontiac on a three-hour bus tour highlighting points of pride and sources of concern throughout the Pontiac community. This tour stimulated further conversation about future needs and opportunities. This dialogue will continue at future town hall meetings, open to OU and Pontiac members of the public.

Future plans include expanded college readiness programs, various economic development activities, a wider variety of experiential learning opportunities for Oakland students, student activities planned for downtown venues, partnership banners displayed in downtown Pontiac, and a possible University site in the city.

In our ongoing effort to link the community with the campus, a website including an interactive asset mapping tool linking resources and needs will be made available. Initiative leadership is also exploring potential grants to support projects.

There are limitless opportunities for Oakland University faculty, staff and students to become involved. For more information and to let us know about the work you are doing in Pontiac, contact me at (248) 370-3087 or Maxfiel2@oakland.edu.

— **C. Robert Maxfield**

Special Assistant to the President and Provost for the Pontiac Partnership

“From my perspective, the Pontiac Initiative is important because it opens the lines of communication between OU and the City of Pontiac, and that allows for learning to occur for everyone involved. In the future, I hope to see this partnership serve as a mutually beneficial collaboration to promote greater wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.”

— **Alcia Freeman**, doctoral student in SEHS Counseling



“It’s a start. Our job is to chronicle that rise of Pontiac becoming great again, creative again, cool again – and it’s getting there. When you go to other big universities like Michigan or State, they’re surrounded by communities that are the “college town.” OU’s surrounded by Auburn Hills and Rochester and we’re not really a part of those communities in the same way. Pontiac could be that college town for OU. As the city cleans up its image, you’re going to see a lot more students feeling comfortable going down there. I think it’s important for students to have that place to hang out.”

— **Anthony Spak**, OU journalism student, communications coordinator intern with City Hall

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS

Thomas E. Kimble
President, Michigan AARP

C. Robert Maxfield
Special Assistant to the President and Provost for the Pontiac Partnership

MEMBERS

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Ed Bahoura
Local businessman and representative from the Chaldean Community

Diane Baldwin
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Cassandra Barragan
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Beverly Beltramo
Chief Mission Officer, St. Joseph's Hospital

David Bowman
Oakland County Commissioner

Gottfried Brieger
Retired Professor and Adviser to Mayor

Carl Byerly
CEO, Michigan School for the Arts and Pontiac Arts Commission

Brenda Carter
President, Pontiac Board of Education Leadership

Kevin Corcoran
Dean, OU College of Arts and Sciences

Rick David
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Rosana Hull
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James Jackson
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Kelley Williams
Superintendent, Pontiac School District

Kermit Williams
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