

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

KEEPER OF THE DREAM – 2022

January 17, 2022

- Thank you, Omar... and thank you to the staff of OU's Center for Multicultural Initiatives for all that you do to develop programs and support services.
- Your work is an essential part of heightening our awareness, appreciation and promotion of cultural and racial diversity.
- And, your commitment to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion – hallmarks of Dr. King's philosophy – are primary reasons we honor the many cultural traditions and values that make Oakland University a welcoming campus.
 - I'd like to also take a moment to acknowledge the leadership of our Vice President of Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer Glenn McIntosh...
 - ...and will members of our DEI council please stand...
 - Please join with me in applauding their ongoing efforts to make Oakland University a model of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Under the leadership of the DEI council, we kicked off a campus-wide Diversity Challenge, which invites our community to learn more about diversity, equity and inclusion....
- ...and, this past year, we created diversity advocates to serve on every search committee that hires faculty and staff.
- Since March 2020, we have lived with the constant reminder of our vital connection to each other.
- When weary of the pandemic, we point to the inconvenience, exhaustion and pain caused by Covid.
- In other moments, however, we have witnessed what we can accomplish when we work together...care for each other...and recognize the broader family of humanity.
- That spirit of cooperation and common cause is at the heart of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s mission and the principle that brings us together today at our annual "Keeper of the Dream" celebration.
- "Keeper of the Dream" and the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. remind us that community bonds are held together by

common values – the values of compassion, tolerance, and civility.

- We must gain strength from each other and together face the challenge at the heart of King's timeless message.
- It's not enough to share in the common values of justice, each of us must support the OU pledge, which is be willing to speak up, stand strong and stand together.
 - That means in the spirit of King we take a stand when it comes to racism, poverty, economic inequities, environmental exploitation and intolerance.
- This year's Keeper of the Dream students would make King very proud.... They certainly make all of us proud.

They embody exceptional leadership qualities and have proven that they are breaking down racial and cultural stereotypes, promoting unity, and playing a vital role in fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive Oakland University campus.

- Today's Keeper of the Dream event has been held annually since From the beginning, we have been supported by our generous sponsors.
- On behalf of Oakland University, thank you to our Premier Platinum Reception Sponsor, PNC Bank.
- And thank you to our Event Sponsor, Rocket Companies.
- **African American Celebration Month Sponsor:** Oakland University Credit Union and Kathleen Ligocki and Pete Rosenau
- **Benefactor Sponsor:** Oakland University Alumni Association
- **Scholarship Sponsors:** Magna, Flagstar Bank, Autoliv, Willis Towers Watson, Lynne A. McIntosh Memorial Scholarship, Lynne and Lia McIntosh Scholarship, Marshall Family Scholar Foundation, and Meritor
- **Vision Sponsors:** Comcast/NBC Universal, Adient, and Oakland University Black Alumni Chapter
- **Retention Scholarship Sponsors:** PNC Bank, Adient, Meritor, Kathleen Ligocki and Pete Rosenau, Oakland University Credit Union, Oakland University Alumni Association and Oakland University Black Alumni Chapter.
- This event would not be possible without the support of our Again, thank you for your generosity, and your commitment to honoring Dr. King's legacy of social justice.
- Now, please join me in welcoming back to podium Omar Brown-El.