

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

SECS RESEARCH BUILDING OPENING

May 20, 2024

Today's commemoration of the SECS Research Building is another compelling sign of Oakland University's commitment to research that is having a fundamental impact on our communities and our world, and research that is a critical component in the ongoing economic vitality of the region.

Because of our talented researchers, Oakland University is rising in the ranks of research universities. Oakland now ranks 233 among 637 U.S. universities federally ranked by research expenditures. That's a 44-place rise in the rankings in one year, we are now positioned higher than our peer institutions, including Central Michigan, Western Michigan, U-M Dearborn, Eastern Michigan, Grand Valley State, Saginaw Valley State and Northern Michigan. From fiscal year 2020 to 2022, Oakland has more than tripled research expenditures, from \$12.9 million to \$38 million.

And now, with the Research and Innovation Center, we expect further impressive growth. As a university, we demonstrate our value in many ways. Education certainly is at the core of a lifetime of opportunity. Education is the means for a broader, collective understanding of our diverse world of people, culture and ideas. And education is that pathway to new discoveries through research.

In many ways, it is within this nearly 50,000 -square-foot facility where the future is conceived. It is here that bioengineering, mechanical, electrical, industrial, and computer science labs will serve as a hub for research conducted in partnership with industry.

From an education standpoint, this research-and-innovation center empowers faculty, students and our industries partners to push boundaries and look for the discoveries that address the economic and technological challenges of our times – challenges in advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, data science and cybersecurity, autonomous and connected systems, bioengineering, and power-generation and energy.

This center stands a cornerstone of progress in Oakland's research and the type of fertile industry relationships vital to our future.

The faculty whose work is core to the functioning of this center have received more than \$10 million in external research funding annually for three consecutive years, including a \$3-million federal community project awards through the National Institute of Standards and Technology, supported by U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens and will allow OU to acquire an automotive antenna measurement system vital for testing of wireless systems.

Another \$3-million award supported by Rep. John James that allows Oakland to address challenges in vehicle electrification.

And as an example of our strong partnerships with industry, thank you to Mitsubishi Electric Automotive USA for donating a vehicle simulator to support experimentation and research.

It is our hope that our new center will play an integral role in the research of the next generation of automotive technology, electrification, prototyping and testing as Oakland supports our region's industries as they compete in the ever-competitive global market.

The Research and Innovation Center now stands among the many research centers around campus that are critical to Oakland's mission.

Oakland is serving our communities through research in the areas of autism, eye research, biomedicine, cybersecurity, data science and analytics, robotics and automation, clean energy, to name a few.

Research and education go hand in hand. We are committed to student success based on research, hands-on activities, and real-world experiences. The type of education and experience that truly distinguishes Oakland as a catalyst in the progress of our region.