

Tuesday, Jan 05, 2016

## OU's 2016 Keeper of the Dream Award winners announced

Now in its 24th year, Oakland University's Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration continues to recognize student leaders who promote diversity, cultural understanding and community activism.

This year's event, featuring keynote speaker LeVar Burton, will take place from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 18, in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms on OU's campus. The event is free and open to the public.

During the ceremony, five students will be recognized for their efforts to break down racial and cultural stereotypes:



**Carlie Austin,**  
nursing



**Myshia Liles-  
Moultrie,**  
social work



**Christina Root,**  
social work



**Betira Shahollari,**  
finance



**Tasha Tinglan,**  
social work

"The Keeper of the Dream awards are one way we honor Dr. King's legacy here at Oakland each year," said Omar Brown-El, director of the Center for Multicultural Initiatives. "It's also a celebration to honor some outstanding students who reflect Dr. King's vision on our campus

This year's keynote speaker is actor, director, producer and literacy advocate LeVar Burton. With a career spanning nearly 40 years, Burton is known for his iconic role as Kunta Kinte in the landmark television series "Roots" and also gained fame as Chief Engineer Geordi La Forge on "Star Trek: The Next Generation." In addition to numerous feature film credits, Burton is also recognized for his work as host of the Emmy winning PBS children's series "Reading Rainbow," which aired from 1983-2009.

Burton's career achievements include 12 Emmy Awards, five NAACP Awards and a Grammy Award. In 2014, on the heels of the Reading Rainbow Kickstarter campaign, he was named Geek of the Year during the Geekie Awards, listed as one of Ebony Magazine's Power 100 and earned the World Tech Award for Education from the World Technology Network.

Established in 1993, Keeper of the Dream provides annual scholarships of up to \$5,000 for students who have demonstrated strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership. Since the program's inception, more than 90 students from a variety of academic majors have been awarded scholarships.

The 2015 Keeper of the Dream scholarships are sponsored by OU Credit Union, OU Alumni Association, Autoliv, Beaumont Health System and L&L McIntosh Scholarship Fund. This year's Unity sponsors are Key Bank Foundation and Avis Ford. The speaker sponsor is OU's Student Life Lecture Board.

Keeper of the Dream also marks the start of African American Celebration Month at Oakland, which runs through Thursday, Feb. 18. The campus community will participate in a series of events highlighting the importance of diversity and raising awareness of African American contributions to society. This year's theme is "Preserving Our Heritage."

Visit the AACM 2016 [website](#) for a complete listing of



LeVar Burton is the keynote speaker for the Jan. 18 event, which is free and open to the public.

For more information on the Keeper of the Dream event, call the Center for Multicultural Initiatives at (248) 370-4404 or visit [oakland.edu/](http://oakland.edu/)