

**New Student Convocation  
Recreation and Athletics Center Arena  
September 2, 2009  
3 p.m.**

**2:30 p.m.**            **Students and parents begin to arrive in O'rena. Golden Grizzlies Band performs.**

**3:00 p.m.**            **Marta Bauer, MC**  
*(Ask audience to  
"Please stand for the faculty processional)*

**Faculty Processional**

**3:05 p.m.**            **Marta Bauer, MC**  
*(Ask people to be seated if still standing by saying "**Please be seated.**")*

- Good afternoon and welcome!
- My name is Marta Bauer. I am your master of ceremonies this afternoon.
- I am a junior at OU, studying English and French, and I am honored to be a part of this event today.
- During this ceremony and fair, you'll learn a lot of important information about opportunities at Oakland University.
- Like anything in life – college is what you make it.
- We hope that with the information you receive today, you can make your OU experience "the time of your life."
- With the resources available to you as an Oakland student, you'll be able to learn about the world around you, your career and life options, and about yourself.

- So take advantage of the information you receive today – and throughout the months ahead – to make sure you learn all you can about the university and everything it has to offer students.
- You'll find it is the first step in achieving great things.
- And by the time you leave today, I hope you'll feel as proud as I am to be a Golden Grizzly!
- It is now my pleasure to introduce our President, Dr. Gary Russi. [*Russ-ee*]. During the last thirteen years he has led this university, its faculty, staff and students, to extraordinary growth.
- Dr. Russi...

**Dr. Russi:**

- Thank you, Marta, and good afternoon.
- It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to the Oakland University campus – and to New Student Convocation.
- It is heartwarming and encouraging to see so many of our new students and their families joining us for this important day.
- I'd now like to introduce some important members of the university community.
- Would members of the platform party please stand and be recognized when your name is called? Please hold your applause until everyone has been introduced.

Starting in the back row:

- Julie Voelck, Dean, Kresge Library
- Mohan Tanniru, Dean, School of Business Administration
- Ron Sudol, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
- Robert Folberg, Dean, Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine
- Ken Hightower, Dean, School of Health Sciences

- Linda Thompson Adams, Dean, School of Nursing
- Pieter Frick, Dean, School of Engineering and Computer Science
- Bill Keane, Interim Dean, School of Education and Human Services

And in the middle row:

- Michelle Piskulich, Associate Provost
- T.C. Yih, Vice Provost
- Sue Goepp, Vice President, University Relations
- John Beahgan, Vice President, Finance and Administration
- Rochelle Black, Vice President, Government Relations
- Vic Zambardi, Vice President, Legal Affairs
- Susan Awbrey, Senior Associate Provost
- Tamara Jhashi, Associate Provost

And in the front row:

- Richard Stamps, Professor of Anthropology, Keynote speaker
- Mary Beth Snyder, Vice President, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
- Virinder Moudgil, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Jacqueline Long, Chair, OU Board of Trustees
- Marta Bower, emcee, OGL and Honors College junior

Please join me in recognizing these individuals.

- Let us also take a moment to thank our outstanding faculty, who dedicate their time and expertise to ensure Oakland University students receive an outstanding education.
- Please join me in acknowledging their hard work.
- This is one of my favorite times at OU.
- Today, you are venturing out on a new experience and a new chapter in your life.
- You are beginning a great journey that we call the “Oakland experience.” Your journey will be filled with challenge, hard work, new relationships and friendships, personal growth and fun. I am pleased that you chose us to be a part of your educational journey. You have made a **great** choice.

**Marta Bauer:**

- Thank you, Dr. Russi.
- I know I made the right choice by attending OU!
- And now, I am pleased to introduce the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Virinder [Ver-in-der] Moudgil [Mood-gill], who is the chief academic officer of the university and, in fact, still maintains an active research lab as a professor of biological sciences. Dr. Moudgil?

**Dr. Moudgil:**

- Thank you, Marta.
- On behalf of my faculty colleagues at Oakland University, I'm pleased to welcome you to our campus. I look forward to meeting many of you.
- Please join us immediately following this ceremony for an informational fair held in the three-court gym, located in the lower level of the Rec Center. The fair will showcase the activities of our students, including academic projects, organizations, and service components.
- At OU, we provide students with real-world opportunities to learn and grow. Students work side-by-side with recognized and expert faculty researchers, exploring questions as diverse as how to make fuel emissions environmentally sound, to the effects of salt on blood pressure, or how to make a more effective heart defibrillator.
- We recently renovated our science and engineering instructional labs to provide state-of-the-art facilities for our faculty and students in support of their educational experience.
- We also partner with businesses and organizations so students can obtain hands-on, internship experience in real-life, real-work settings. Our students travel and experience the globe – last year more than 200 studied abroad in countries ranging from Korea to England to China to Israel to Argentina. I hope you will explore these opportunities and expand your intellectual horizon.

- Now, it is my pleasure to introduce a colleague and the main speaker of the program.
- Richard Stamps is an associate professor of anthropology at Oakland University. For 35 years, Professor Stamps has worked with students to expand their world view – both culturally and academically.
- Just this year, he traveled with undergraduate students to the Middle East where they were immersed in the historical, cultural, religious and educational sites of the region.
- He has received the Honorary Alumnus Award from the OU Alumni Association. He was a recipient of OU's Teaching Excellence Award and the Michigan Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities Distinguished Faculty Award.
- Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome to the podium, **Professor Richard Stamps**.

**Professor Stamps (5 minutes):**

- On behalf of the Oakland University Faculty – welcome!
- I have titled my remarks “Realizing your Potential.”
- By virtue of the fact that you are here today as an Oakland University student means you have passed the first test. You were admitted after a review of your past performance, and we salute your accomplishments, congratulations and welcome!
- According to a recent *Detroit Free Press* article, one out of three working-age Michigan adults lack the basic skills or credentials to attain family-sustaining jobs and contribute to the state's economy.
- Forty-four percent of Michigan adults read below the sixth-grade level.
- Sixty percent of new students at community colleges need remedial education before they can take college courses.
- This is a serious problem.
- Your undertaking a university education places you on a path to success.

- There are different measures of success; one is how much money you earn in a lifetime.
  - High School grads: \$1,000,000
  - With some college or an associates degree: \$1,300,000
  - Bachelor's degree: \$1,800,000
- We want you to become productive and professional citizens. Your taxes can more effectively support state universities – more support from the state would mean lower tuition.
- We want you to be happy, financially secure Alumni. We do recognize that there is more to your quality of life than just money.
- Pam Danziger “Americans have “been on an extended buying spree for the past 20 years. They’ve got stuff, and they don’t need a lot of it”.
- There’s a growing realization “that material wealth doesn’t make people happy.” Happiness does not come from stuff.
- There is more to life than money. Here at the university you are exposed to a variety of sources of true happiness, a solid well-rounded education tops the list.
- We are not here to simply teach you how to operate a machine or run some software program on the computer.
- The 2008 “Did You Know” site on YouTube reminds us that “the amount of new technological information is doubling every two years, for students starting a four year technical degree this means that half of what they learn in their first year of study will be outdated by their third year of study.”
- For 25 years I have been telling students that “you will retire from a job using technology that has not been invented yet.”
- The challenge is how do we prepare you for the unknown? You need to learn to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. You need to learn to recognize problems, gather data, analyze the data and communicate your findings.

- Attending the university is an opportunity to grow academically, personally, socially and culturally.
- Treat the university as a Buffet Restaurant. Sample through the General Education program's different classes. Find what you like – "We like what we do well and do well what we like."
- Find what you really enjoy, then pursue those dreams. As Spike Lee said on our campus during his visit "Find your passion, then wrap your career around it."
- Take advantage of the opportunities that are here, join the clubs, go to the games, discover the library, enjoy the plays and concerts, expand your minds in the art gallery, discover in the labs, and participate in an archeological dig?
- Take advantage of the research opportunities that are here. This July, the provost's research grants helped take nine students to Israel to study at museums and then join an archaeological dig.
- Business and Engineering students went to China to work side by side with Chinese students in Shanghai and Beijing.
- So, get involved. Prepare yourselves. Richard Posner a U.S. Court of Appeals judge said what no elected official dares to say: "As society becomes more competitive, income inequality is likely to rise simply as a consequence of the underlying inequality due to differences in ability, energy, health, social skills, character, ambition, physical attractiveness, talent, and luck."
- Some of this we cannot influence (i.e., IQ, talent, luck) but some of this we can.
- Develop your social skills, build your character, embrace a healthy life style, get yourself a TV or radio show, publish in the school newspaper, travel with the Student Activities trips, and get involved in student government.

- The statement “Knowledge is Power” is only partially true, unless you apply the knowledge nothing is going to happen – “Applied Knowledge is Power.”
- You are here and there is a lot of knowledge in the Library, in the heads of my colleagues. You have access to it, but it is up to you to go get it.
- Knowledge is good, life is good, opportunities are here but you need to match up who you are with the knowledge to get you where you want to be.
- Don’t say “I can’t learn Chinese because it is hard,” little Chinese kids do it, you can do it, you just need to work at it.
- Oakland University is an outstanding university that is focused on providing a comprehensive educational experience for the student: take advantage of this time to explore, get to know the world and yourself.
- It’s ok if you don’t know what you want to do right now – you don’t need to have your whole life planned out.
- You’re here to explore and find your passion. And OU faculty, staff and student resources can help. We’re here to help you realize you’re potential. The ball is in your court, go for it!
- Welcome to OU – Go OU!

**Marta Bauer:**

- Thank you, Professor Stamps, for your words of encouragement.
- Now it is my pleasure to introduce OU’s Vice President for Student Affairs, Mary Beth Snyder.
- Vice President Snyder and her division assist students throughout their college experience...from admissions, to residence halls, to career advising.
- They will help you make your college experience successful, whether you live on campus or commute.



- Please help me welcome Mary Beth Snyder, vice president for Student Affairs.

**Mary Beth Snyder (2-3 minutes):**

- Thank you Marta, and good afternoon to everyone.
- I, too, want to extend a warm welcome our new students and family members.
- I've been sitting up here watching some of you fidget with your cell phones. I hope you're on Twitter telling your friends that you're at an awesome university.
- When we admitted you, it was a decision to enter into a long-term relationship with you. And like any good relationship, we know it takes a serious commitment by both parties to be satisfying over the long haul.
- I'm sure you've heard some of those TV interviews with long-time married couples who, when asked the secrets to their happy marriages, usually say the relationship succeeded because they knew from the get go it would require hard work, constant communication, respect for their partner and shared good times along the way.
- That's exactly the kind of relationship we want with you.
- We know it works best when the university, as one side of the partnership, and our students, as the other partner, commit to doing the hard work involved in honestly talking to one another, being respectful, and making sure to balance things out with fun.
- Open Communication is probably the hardest of these to achieve over the long haul. Parties can give up or get lazy. But communication is the main building block of your relationship with OU from this day forward. You're now in a culture that thrives ONLY when we communicate.
- Your professors are anxious to meet and teach you in your classes.
- Listen carefully to what they have to say ...about the subject they love and about their high expectations for what you can accomplish.

- Their goal is to push you to explore a world of new ideas and ways of thinking to the point that you want to spend your next 4-5 years, or your lifetime, studying and learning something you (and they're) passionate about.
- As Oakland's partner, your job is to talk to us on a regular basis. We find that many new students are reluctant to express their concerns or views.
- Let me remind you, this isn't high school. We expect you to shower us with difficult questions and even debate with us.
- Don't be intimidated. Students who speak up in classes, who seek out their professors, who let staff know when they have a problem, who reach beyond their home town friends to meet new students, are the ones who graduate with the highest degree of satisfaction.
- Now, about respect. The University prides itself on the high level of respect we hold for the many different people and ideas swirling around the community. Right from the start, we want you to feel free to be yourself, but ask, too, that you give other students the same latitude to be themselves.
- We learn best when we welcome all kinds of people and ideas into our lives and treat them without recriminations and quick, harsh judgments.
- One last thought about respect. At the most basic level of daily life here, we ask students to show their respect to the faculty and staff by arriving for classes and appointments on time, turning off cell phones, addressing individuals with appropriate titles ("hey Dude" isn't going to endear you to your professor), and treating one's own friends with dignity when in FaceBook and other media outlets.
- My final comments have to do with the glue that cements all good relationships...the shared adventures, the fun and relaxation. As soon as convocation is finished, we all head downstairs where there are tons of examples of what the University offers during those times when you're not engaged in your studies.
- These are the opportunities that bring us back down to reality in the midst of all the hard work that goes on.

- We have more than 180 student clubs that cover every student interest from politics to volunteerism to sports to religion and more.
- Starting tomorrow, you'll be engulfed by ads and information about major lecturers, film festivals, theater and dance productions, internships, environmental initiatives, intramural and varsity sports, bike share programs, comedians, robotic competitions, campus jobs, campus radio, student congress meetings, Meadow Brook Hall dances, the list really is endless.
- At the end of classes each day, you don't want to jump in your car and head for home. By sticking around campus, you'll see that the time you invest in extracurricular activities will directly correlate with how happy you are in this relationship and with college.
- With a personal promise today that you agree to do the hard work required to develop a happy relationship I promise OU will be a good, supportive mate throughout the journey to your degree.
- And to prove we're not making this stuff up, I invite you to watch a brief video showing what happens in the lives of our students that keeps the relationship fresh. To paraphrase the guy in the Men's Wear House commercial "You're gonna love the way we look."

## **SHOW VIDEO**

- I wish you a lot of fulfillment and success this coming year.
- Thanks again for choosing to attend Oakland University.
- Together, we're going to forge a great relationship.

## **Marta Bauer:**

- Thank you.
- As we heard from our speakers, and saw in the video, getting involved in activities and organizations during your years here at Oakland University can make all the difference in your experience.

- Because of my involvement with the Golden Key Honors Society, I've been able to meet other students from around the world, including Australia and South Africa.
- And as an orientation group leader, and through my work with the Honors College, I've been able to make great friends, and share my experiences while learning about other people.
- You'll find as a new student at OU, that college is a big change from high school.
- But don't be afraid to try new things.
- It's how you learn about the world, and most importantly, about yourself.
- So get involved.
- I'd like to invite you to attend Student Congress meetings. They meet every Monday at 4 o'clock in the Oakland Center. All students are invited – and encouraged – to attend.
- Student Congress is the driving force behind our Student Program Board, which organizes many activities for students – an average of 60 each year!
- The Student Congress president and vice president are with us today.
- Please welcome:
  - Kristin Dayag, Student Body President, and
  - Saman Waquad, Student Body Vice President
- OU has more than 170 student organizations. Whatever your interests...there is a group of OU students ready to share those interests with you.
- I also encourage you to participate in Welcome Week — it's a great time to meet new people and take a look at the events we have planned for the coming year.

- We'll have concerts in the Oakland Center and many interesting speakers. For example, on Sept. 30, Food Network host Alton Brown will be speaking in the O'rena.
- And, of course, there are the athletics events. From soccer to basketball to baseball next spring, OU men's and women's teams are highly competitive.
- Go Grizzlies!
- And now the Oakland University Golden Grizzlies Band, led by Associate Professor of Music Kenneth Kroesche [*Kresh ee*], and our orientation group leaders will lead us in the OU Fight Song. OGLs please make your way to the front and we'll get started. (*Allow time for OGLs to get in place.*)
- Now that you are official Golden Grizzlies, let's hear your OU spirit by following along in your program or up on the screen.
- Please stand and help me give a warm welcome to the Golden Grizzlies Band!

**Marta Bauer:**

- Thank you Professor Kroesche, band members and OGLs.
- Thanks also to our sign language interpreter, Ms. Marcia Marshall.
- We now invite you, your family and friends to a reception and fair on the lower level lobby of the Recreation Center.
- In addition to enjoying great food, you'll have an opportunity to meet and get involved with all of our student organizations on campus.
- As you move to the reception pick up a t-shirt at the entrance.
- As we conclude our program, parents, family members and friends: please remain here until the recessional is complete.
- Once the faculty recessional is complete, please follow through the doors to my right, or your left, to enjoy the fair. (*Point to the right*)

- For those of you in the upper seating area, you may exit at the top of your seating area and proceed to the southeast corner (*point to the right*) and down two flights of stairs to the recreation center.
- Thank you again for coming and best of luck to you all.
- Will everyone now please rise for the recessional?

**Platform party recesses**

**Reception and fair immediately following (4 p.m.)**

9/1/09