

‘Aspire. Advance. Achieve.’

OU's comprehensive campaign will focus on the areas of student success; teaching, research and discovery; community collaboration; campus expansion; and innovative programs.



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Oakland University will launch the public phase of its comprehensive campaign, “Aspire. Advance. Achieve,” at a November 17 gala headlined by acclaimed author and journalist Malcolm Gladwell.

The black-tie event will begin with a reception at 5:30 p.m. in the Banquet Rooms of the Oakland Center, followed by dinner and program at 6:30 p.m. in the Founders Ballroom. To order tickets, [click here](#).

The campaign has been in the ‘quiet phase’ of fundraising for the past two years and is part of a comprehensive effort to shape the future of Oakland University and the surrounding community.

It will focus on five key areas:

- Student success
- Teaching, research and discovery
- Community collaboration
- Campus expansion
- Innovative programs

“This will be the largest campaign in the University’s history,” said Mike Westfall, vice president for university advancement. “OU has a great community of alumni, friends and corporate partners. Their generosity has enhanced Oakland for the last 60 years, following the initial extraordinary gift by Matilda Dodge Wilson.”

A longtime writer for *The New Yorker* magazine, Gladwell has authored five *New York Times* bestsellers. He’s also been named one of the 100 most influential people by *TIME* magazine and was previously a reporter for the *Washington Post*.

Along with his writing career, Gladwell hosts a popular weekly podcast called [Revisionist History](#), in which he re-examines an overlooked or misunderstood aspect of past events. He has written and spoken extensively about



Malcolm Gladwell will speak at OU on November 17.

education issues, particularly as they relate to higher education funding.

According to Alison Gaudreau, senior director of campaign management, Gladwell's research on higher education philanthropy made him a top choice in kicking off this groundbreaking campaign.

"We invited Gladwell primarily because of a podcast episode he created about a small college that became Rowan University," Gaudreau said. "Just like at Rowan, philanthropy to Oakland University has the potential to make a transformative impact. The episode speaks to the same themes that Dr. Pescovitz does when she describes why she chose to come to OU."

Gladwell's visit will include two speaking engagements – a black-tie gala in the evening and an afternoon talk with OU students.

The afternoon session with students will take place from 1:30–3 p.m. in Dodge Hall, room 201. At the event, Honors College Dean Graeme Harper will interview Gladwell about "Big Ideas," a link to one of Gladwell's latest ventures, [The Next Big Idea Club](#), which highlights new and innovative thinkers. The event will also include a question-and-answer session and a book signing.

Other events in connection with the campaign include:

- [A Young Alumni Campaign Launch](#) from 6–8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 8 at Meadow Brook House
- An AUFD Mid-Point Celebration from 8–9 a.m. on Wednesday, November 14 in the Oakland Center Founders Ballrooms for OU faculty, staff and retirees.
- The Aspire. Advance. Achieve. Student Celebration from 11 a.m.–1 p.m. on Tuesday, November 27, held next to the food court in the Oakland Center.

The campaign gala is sponsored by Presenting sponsor Oakland University Credit Union. Other sponsors include Achieve sponsors Beaumont Health and TIAA; Advance sponsors PwC; and Aspire sponsors Henry Ford Health System, Aptiv Foundation, Pino Insurance Agency, President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz and Dr. Daniel Gerard Walsh, and W. David and Reneé Tull and Richard L. DeVore.

Learn more about the University's comprehensive campaign at oakland.edu/giving.

