

Presidential Remarks

Golden Grizzlies Summit

August 17, 2022

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- It's been about 27 months since the onset of the pandemic, which required nothing less than reinventing how we deliver courses, campus life and the administration of the university.
- While our daily focus has been on providing the healthiest and safest campus possible, we have continued to push ahead...in making sure Oakland is a dynamic learning environment.
- I'd like to take a few moments to present a snapshot of developments that are positioning Oakland University as "the university of choice."
- There are exciting visible and conceptual transformations occurring that I think will make you quite proud...
 - Construction has begun on South Foundation Hall, a place where nearly all students attend class....
 - Classrooms and rehearsal space are being added to Varner Hall
 - A contemporary Welcome Center in the expanded Wilson Hall will be ready this fall to greet new and returning students
 - A state-of-the art Welcome Center is also planned to complement Meadow Brook Hall, one of the country's cultural jewels.
 - A new façade and renovated interior at O'Dowd Hall will make the OUWB Medical School a distinctive campus landmark
 - Final improvements are underway at the engineering research building, where our talented faculty will collaborate with a range of industries in seeking breakthrough innovations...

- And with the purchase of an expansive 140,000-square-foot west-campus building site that's partly in Pontiac and partly in Auburn Hills, we are in position to build on our reputation as a talent pipeline for the region's healthcare industry with an upcoming physician's assistant program and new home for a range of our health sciences programs.
- There is no question that there are major changes ahead for higher education institutions across the nation...and Oakland University remains vigilant and committed to being "the university of choice."
 - That ambition is at the heart of our "Reimagining OU" initiative, which engages students, faculty and staff in exploring ways to further develop our culture and community engagement.
- We know today's students seek a range of learning options, including in-person, online and hybrid....
- We know today's students expect their time and money spent on their education will translate to good, well-paying job. And, we have an obligation to make sure it does.
- And, we know today's students want to be engaged in a campus community that is committed to sustainability and respects the environment...and they want to be a part of a university that acts responsibly.
 - Over the past year, we've made significant strides in developing a comprehensive university sustainability plan, and have a partnership with Oakland County that will draw upon our faculty and students.
- We hope to sustain a deep and meaningful relationship with our alumni, and continue to play a prominent role in your lives.
- We take great pride that we were there at the beginning of your journey...and we consider it an honor to be with you every subsequent step of the way.
- We are so proud of each of tonight's honorees -- along with OU alumni everywhere -- for representing the promise and legacy of Oakland University.

- Tonight, we take great pride in telling your story, and sharing your success because your story is our story, and your success is our success.
- Now, I'd like to invite Erin Sudrovec back to the stage to continue with tonight's awards ceremony.