



Tuesday, February 10, 2004

Keeper of the Dream award winners to be honored

By **Kelly Smith**, OU Writer

In recognition of their strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership in promoting interracial understanding, Oakland University will award five students with \$5,000 scholarships at the 12th annual **Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Banquet** on Thursday, Feb. 19, at 6:30 p.m. in the Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion.

As one of the most anticipated events on campus, the banquet will honor the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and celebrate this year's scholarship recipients:

- **Lenwood Compton**, an education major from Pontiac;
- **George Davis**, a journalism major from Grand Rapids;
- **Joi Durant**, a communications major from Sterling Heights;
- **James Ellout**, an English major from Pontiac; and
- **Sophia Soldana**, an elementary education major from Clinton Township.

Daniel Mulhern, first gentleman of Michigan, will deliver this year's keynote address. Mulhern is the co-founder of the Mulhern Hastings Group, a leadership and organizational development firm located in Detroit. Previously, he taught leadership principles at Tufts University, Wayne State University and the University of Michigan-Dearborn. As a chairman of the Michigan Community Service Commission, he leads the expansion of Mentor Michigan, a program that matches caring adults with young people.

By observing, teaching and practicing effective leadership throughout his entire life, Mulhern successfully represents this year's scholarship awards banquet theme "Fulfilling the Dream through Education."

Individual seats for the banquet are \$100 and tables of 10 are \$1,000. For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Office of Special Events at (248) 370-4915. Historical information about the Keeper of the Dream program can be found on the **Center for Multicultural Initiatives** Web site.

2004 Keeper of the Dream Award Winners:

Lenwood Compton

Compton will receive the Bank One Keeper of the Dream Award.

He has tirelessly devoted hundreds of hours to tutoring first- through third-grade students at the Great Lakes Academy in Pontiac. He also developed lesson plans and curricula for day camps through the Pontiac Area Transitional Housing program. In recognition of his efforts, Compton's AmeriCorps peers named him "Mr. AmeriCorps 2001 and 2002". Even President George W. Bush has praised his dedication to volunteerism. In January 2003, the president invited Compton to attend the State of the Union address and to participate in a White House-sponsored panel discussion on mentoring.

George Davis

Davis will receive the PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP Keeper of the Dream Award.

He has demonstrated excellence in a challenging academic program and remarkable leadership in numerous campus organizations. He is a resident assistant with the Department of University Housing, peer mentor for the Center for Multicultural Initiatives, vice president of the Association of Black Students and lead ambassador for the Office of Admissions. He also has served as former ambassador for the Office of Admissions and as a peer mentor for Project Upward Bound. In recognition of his remarkable leadership and academic promise, Davis received the Handleman

Scholarship.

Joi Durant

Durant is this year's recipient of the William Beaumont Hospital Keeper of the Dream Award.

Despite a demanding course load, Durant still finds time to help the OU campus and community. She has volunteered for the Center for Student Activities VIP Program, OU Prospective Students Weekend, Zeta Phi Beta sorority's Stork's Nest prenatal care project, Pontiac Silverdome outreach programs and the Adopt-A-Family Program. Durant works as a King-Chavez-Parks College Day Program lead mentor in the Department of Learning Resources and as a telecounseling team leader/supervisor in the Office of Admissions. Previously, she served as a peer mentor for the Center for Multicultural Initiatives.

James Ellout

Ellout will receive the Comerica Keeper of the Dream Award.

When he wanted to cultivate the thought process of youngsters in his neighborhood, Ellout came up with the idea of creating "Meeting of the Minds," a support group aimed at assisting minority students in developing critical thinking skills. His excellent ideas also are put to good use through his service as a publicity agent for Oakland's Student Congress and as a publicity chairman for the Association of Black Students. He previously worked as an orientation group leader for the Office of New Student Programs.

Sophia Soldana

Soldana is this year's Oakland University Alumni Association Keeper of the Dream Award recipient.

Since 2002, Soldana has volunteered for the AmeriCorps Oakland team and has completed more than 900 hours of service for the Pontiac community. She also participated in more than 30 projects, including painting houses in Pontiac for Paint the Town, teaching elementary students about nature during Dirt Day and educating youngsters on survival tactics of the pioneers at the Rochester Heritage Festival. She currently tutors in the America Reads program and at the Great Lakes Academy in Pontiac. Besides working with young students, she volunteers for the Future Alumni Network (FANs) and at the Autumn Woods Nursing Home.

SUMMARY

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