



Wednesday, February 18, 2004

OU awards Keeper of the Dream scholarships

Oakland University's 12th annual Keeper of the Dream scholarship banquet will be held Thursday, Feb. 19, and feature Daniel G. Mulhern, first gentleman of Michigan, as the keynote speaker. At the banquet, five Oakland University students will each receive a \$5,000 scholarship.

The banquet celebrates the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the legacy of the dream he has left behind. Likewise, the awards recognize students who have demonstrated strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership in breaking down cultural stereotypes and in promoting interracial understanding.

This year's recipients include the following students:

George W. Davis III, a journalism major from Grand Rapids, will be awarded the PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP Keeper of the Dream Award. Davis, making a commitment to teach diversity to his peers and the community, is involved in many campus organizations where he can impart his message of racial harmony. Davis serves as a resident assistant with the Department of University Housing, where he coordinates educational and social programs that promote cultural enrichment. Davis also acts as a mentor in the Center for Multicultural Initiatives, vice president for the Association of Black Students, and lead ambassador for the Office of Admissions. As a peer mentor for Project Upward Bound, he encourages minority students to pursue higher education.

Joi M. Durant, a communications major from Detroit, will receive the William Beaumont Hospital Keeper of the Dream Award. Durant serves as a King-Chavez-Parks (KCP) College Day Program lead mentor in the Department of Learning Resources, where she helps underrepresented students overcome the obstacles they may face while pursuing higher education. She also helps to develop cultural diversity on campus by encouraging minority students to attend Oakland University. In addition to the KCP Program, Durant works in the Office of Admissions as a telecounseling team leader/supervisor, has served as a peer mentor in the Center for Multicultural Initiatives, and 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.

James Ellout, an English major from Pontiac, will be awarded the Comerica Keeper of the Dream Award. Ellout encouraged students from different backgrounds to become involved in OU's numerous campus organizations as a publicity agent for OU's Student Congress, and collaborated with multicultural student organizations to unify OU's campus as the publicity chairman for the Association of Black Students. Ellout has also served as an orientation group leader (OGL) for the Office of New Student Programs and created the support group, "Meeting of the Minds," designed to assist minority students in developing critical thinking skills.

Sophia M. Soldana, an elementary education major from Chicago, will receive the Oakland University Alumni Association Keeper of the Dream Award. Since 2002, Soldana has volunteered for the AmeriCorps Oakland team and has completed more than 900 hours of service for the Pontiac community. In addition, she has participated in more than 30 service projects such as painting homes in Pontiac for "Paint the Town," teaching elementary students about nature during "Dirt Day" and educating youth on how people survived in pioneer days at the Rochester Heritage Festival. Currently, Soldana serves as a tutor in the America Reads program, assisting first through fourth grade students in language arts, and as a tutor through AmeriCorps at the Great Lakes Academy in Pontiac.

Lenwood Compton, an education major from Pontiac, will be awarded the Bank One Keeper of the Dream Award. Compton hopes to influence students to stay in school, believe in themselves and improve their lives. To accomplish

this, Compton has devoted hundreds of hours tutoring first through third grade students at the Great Lakes Academy in Pontiac. He has also developed lesson plans and curricula for day camps through the Pontiac Area Transitional Housing program. In 2001 and 2002, Compton's AmeriCorps peers named him Mr. AmeriCorps. As a Freedom Corps greeter in 2002, Compton welcomed President George W. Bush when he arrived in Michigan for a Republican rally. In 2003, Compton was invited to attend the State of the Union address as the President's guest. While there, he also participated in a White House-sponsored panel discussion on mentoring.

For more information on the Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Awards Banquet or to buy tickets, contact OU's Office of Special Events at (248) 370-4915.

SUMMARY

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Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Wednesday, February 18, 2004

Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Wednesday, February 18, 2004

Article Start Date: Friday, March 12, 2004