

Thursday, January 8, 2015

OU's 2015 Keeper of the Dream event welcomes actress, AIDS activist Jurnee Smollett-Bell

Now in its 23rd year, Oakland University's Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration continues to recognize student leaders who promote diversity, cultural understanding and community activism.

This year's event, featuring keynote speaker Jurnee Smollett-Bell, will take place from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 19, in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms on OU's campus. The event is free and open to the public.

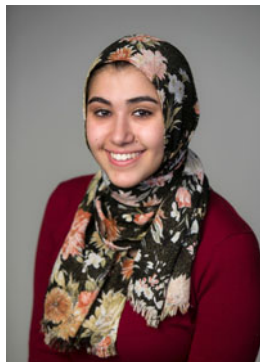
During the ceremony, five students will be recognized for their efforts to break down racial and cultural stereotypes:



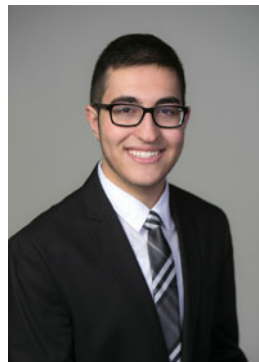
Aukury Cowart
electrical engineering



Chanel Daniels
STEP, history



Zienab Fahs
social work



Joseph Kirma
biomedical science



Taylor Moore
nursing

"The Keeper of the Dream awards are one way we honor Dr. King's legacy here at Oakland each year," said Omar Brown-El, director of the Center for Multicultural Initiatives. "It's also a celebration to honor some outstanding students who reflect Dr. King's vision on our campus."

Keynote speaker Jurnee Smollett-Bell will share her experiences as an award-winning actress and humanitarian activist. Smollett-Bell's acting credits include NBC's Emmy Award-winning series, "Friday Night Lights," "House," "The Great Debaters" and "Grey's Anatomy." She recently appeared on NBC's critically acclaimed series "Parenthood" and on HBO's "True Blood." In addition, she is the youngest board member of Artists for a New South Africa, a nonprofit working in the U.S. and South Africa to combat HIV/AIDS, advance human rights, and educate and empower children orphaned by AIDS, as well as other at-risk youth.

Established in 1993, Keeper of the Dream provides annual scholarships of up to \$5,000 for students who have demonstrated strong citizenship, scholarship and leadership. Since the program's inception, more than 80 students from a variety of academic majors have been awarded scholarships.

The 2015 Keeper of the Dream scholarships are sponsored by Beaumont Health System, L&L McIntosh Scholarship Fund, Autoliv, Oakland University Credit Union and Oakland University Alumni Association. This year's Unity sponsors are AAA of Michigan and Avis Ford.

Keeper of the Dream also marks the start of African American Celebration Month at Oakland, which runs through Thursday, Feb. 19. The campus community will participate in a series of events highlighting the importance of diversity and raising awareness of African American contributions to society. This year's theme is "A Celebration and Reaffirming of Our Culture and History." Visit the AACM 2015 [website](#) for a complete listing of events and activities.

For more information on the Keeper of the Dream event, call the Center for Multicultural Initiatives at (248) 370-4404 or visit oakland.edu/kod.



KEEPER OF THE DREAM
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CELEBRATION

2015 KEYNOTE SPEAKER
JURNEE SMOLLETT-BELL

January 19, 2015

