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OU's Project Upward Bound awarded \$3 million federal grant

Oakland University's Project Upward Bound (PUB), a college preparatory enrichment program, has received a \$3 million grant from the federal government. The five-year grant will help sustain one of the university's most successful and enduring programs. Oakland University's PUB is the second-largest in Michigan and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016.

"This grant funding will be used to implement academic curriculum, as well as social, cultural, and career programming focused on empowering eligible participants to successfully earn postsecondary degrees," said Geraldine Graham, director of OU's PUB.

As OU's longest-running continual community outreach effort, PUB has many services to assist high school students in preparing for higher education. Among them are the Summer Academy, a six-week simulated college experience for high school students, and the Academic Year program, which provides after-school tutoring and character development. OU's PUB serves students from Pontiac and Oak Park schools who have demonstrated the academic potential to succeed in college.

According to Graham, the federal grant is critical because it is the program's only source of funding. PUB serves 133 participants per year, focusing on specific objectives of GPA improvement, proficiency on the M-STEP Exam, student retention and graduation from PUB and high school, success in a rigorous high school curriculum, and post-secondary enrollment and completion.

"Securing this funding means that we can usher at least two more classes of students from 9th grade through high school graduation and into college," Graham added. "We can provide 1-3 years of services for three additional classes."

Statistics point to the program's positive impact. According to Graham, from 2013-2016, an average of 72 percent of high school students in OU's PUB enrolled in postsecondary education within six months of high school graduation, compared to an average of about 38 percent of their peers who were not in OU's PUB.

To learn more about the Project Upward Bound at OU, visit oakland.edu/upwardbound.



Pictured from left are OU Project Upward participants Angelica Tibbitts, Xeng Ch Danya Hill and Ashley Xiong at the 2016 Golden Anniversary Cookout in July 2016



Pictured from left: OU PUB alumna Renee Thornton and Director Geraldine Graham at the Golden Anniversary Cookout