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At 83, student never too old for education

By *Rebecca Wyatt*, OU Web Writer

Granbaha Modiri is a senior at Oakland University. In fact, no one at OU is more senior than him. Born in June 1921, he is 83 years old.

Modiri came to the United States in 1990 from Iran, where he worked as a teacher. He first sent his children to the United States to pursue an education and then followed them here to pursue his own dreams.

"I like all this. I enjoy all classes here," he said about OU.

Education is a part of Modiri's life. Ever since he came to the United States he has been taking classes. He started taking adult education classes to learn English and obtain his high school diploma. He then took classes at Oakland Community College. After graduating from OCC in 2000 with an associate's degree in business administration, he enrolled at OU where he is a communication major. He also studies other topics as well.

"I like to learn the Spanish language," said Modiri, who took Spanish and literature this past semester.

In Iran, Modiri spoke Kurish and Farsi and learned French while attending school. He said learning new things isn't difficult because he can memorize easily. However, when he does need help, there are a number of people who assist him.

A soft-spoken man, Modiri recently sat quietly at one of the tables in the **Oakland Center** across from the **Dean of Students' Office**, studying for his finals.

"They help me a lot," he said pointing to the office of Assistant Dean of Students Karen Lloyd and Dean of Students Glenn McIntosh, whom he refers to as "Mr. Glenn."

"Mr. Modiri embodies the true spirit of learning as a lifelong mission," McIntosh said. "Despite age and physical challenges, he passionately pursues his quest for knowledge. He is certainly a role model worthy of emulation by everyone in our university communication."

Michele St. Denis, manager of student accounts, has helped Modiri understand and deal with any issues with his financial aid or billing information.

"Despite all the obstacles of being older and English being a second language, he is very smart and very tenacious. But he's always pleasant and always happy to see you," St. Denis said.

Modiri commutes to his classes from his home in Keego Harbor. He said he gets to OU at least 15 minutes before his classes, and some days, he comes in at 8 a.m. to avoid the morning traffic.

"This is important to me. For all the time I come to OU, I have no absences," said Modiri, who has been healthy other than having bypass surgery. He said he had the surgery during the winter semester and was able to return in time for spring semester classes

Modiri usually takes classes during all but the winter semester. However, he is enrolled in two classes during the winter 2005 semester because he is close to completing his degree.

"I am close to graduating," he said, which makes him happy because he said he has been working so hard and for so long to graduate. After the winter semester, he will only need three more credits to graduate.

"Mr. Modiri is a kind-hearted man who we have come to respect and admire," Lloyd said. "He has lofty educational goals, and we will do everything possible to help him achieve them."

After Modiri graduates, he intends to take a short break, but will probably return to classes.

"It's hard for me to stay home," he said.

SUMMARY

Granbaha Modiri is a senior at Oakland University. In fact, no one at OU is more senior than him. Born in June 1921, he is 83 years old. Education is a part of Modiri's life. Ever since he came to the United States he has been taking classes. After graduating from OCC in 2000 with an associate's degree in business administration, he enrolled at OU where he is a communication major.

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