

From the Office of the
President

Points of Pride

Colleagues,

Have I shared with you yet that I love alliteration? If not, let this be the week!

Allow me to also propose that our alliterative words of the week should be commitment, cleverness and creativity. Read on to find out why.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.

President

MARCH MADNESS MAN

If you have ever wondered how college athletic teams come to be invited to compete in NCAA championship tournaments, our **Athletic Director Jeff Konya** will soon be able to explain the process based on first-hand experience.

Jeff recently received the great honor of being nominated for and appointed to serve on the 10-member NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship Sport Committee. His five-year term will begin on September 1.



This group of highly experienced, knowledgeable and respected college athletics professionals is responsible for evaluating, selecting, seeding and bracketing women's basketball teams in March Madness tournaments. Those of you who follow college athletics likely know that Selection Committee choices for tournament participation have, at times, been controversial. No pressure there, Jeff!

TELLING TAILS

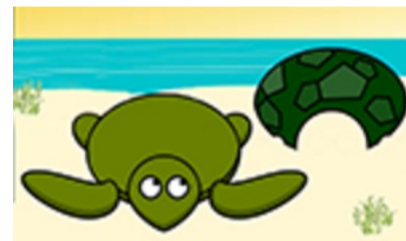


Creative writing students **Mia Sara Denis** and **Reece Scheuer**

Three Oakland University creative writing students have been getting imaginative not only with narratives they conceive, but also with how they use their passions and talents to complete hands-on work that benefits our community.

Serving as interns in the Detroit Zoo Education Department, **Mia Sara Denis**, **Reece Scheuer** and **Rebecca Nadon** have spent the summer researching myths about zoo animals and creating stories that help youngsters understand various cultural relationships with those animals.

As Mia explains it, for example, the Native American god Wenebojo gave tortoises their shells after a member of the once soft-skinned reptile group shared information about where the most fish swam in his pond.



I should note that the students also write grants to support educational activities and create signs on display in zoo exhibits. If there is any doubt as to whether the Detroit Zoo values this work, it is swept away by the fact that **Brittney Diesbourg** – an intern who worked in the same capacity last summer – is now employed by the zoo.

JUST GELLIN'

Faculty and students in our **Studio Art Program** and the **School of Engineering and Computer Science** have spent the last year collaborating on an exhibit for the 2017 Detroit Maker Faire.

Led by **Associate Professor Colleen Ludwig** in the Studio Art Program and **Professor Khalid Mirza** in the SECS' Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, four students came to the same design table with differing academic perspectives.



New media art students **Sana Mirza** and **Tara Forstner** worked with engineering students **Nicholas Gracey** and **Carla Gerst**, however, to merge their creative, resourceful, inventive and provocative ideas in an impressive way.

The result of their work – an interactive, animated and colorfully illuminated robotic sculpture called "Jelly" – won a blue ribbon at this year's Maker Faire. Exhibit participants activate the jellyfish-like creation by collaboratively experimenting with gel-filled sensor pad controllers. You can see it at work in [this video](#).

*Is there a point of pride you feel is worth sharing with the campus community?
If so, please [submit your idea](#) for consideration.*

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