

Points of Pride

Colleagues,

Reflecting on this week's Points of Pride, I find myself thinking about an intriguing assertion by renowned 19th century painter and architect Winslow Homer. He said, "There's no such thing as talent. What they call talent is nothing but the capacity for doing continuous hard work in the right way." Take a look at the updates below and see if you think Mr. Homer has a point.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

WRITE ON THE MARK

In higher education, it seems we are ever increasingly focused on exemplary academic achievement and practical career development. These are critical aspirations, but I think we should not let them overshadow equally important goals with outcomes not as easily measured as grade point averages and professional earning potential.

If you read this [recent column](#) by OU journalism student and Chicago Tribune feature writing intern **Erin Ben-Moche**, I think you will agree that she personifies a prevalent and admirable profile among OU students and alumni. That profile is imbued with resilience and resourcefulness.

Erin and her parents deserve most of the credit for her fine character, of course. Still, I suspect that faculty, staff and Erin's fellow students likely played a noteworthy role in helping to fortify Erin's better qualities.



IT'S POURING



Just last week I shared news of the volleyball team winning national recognition for players' academic success. Well, you know what they say about when it rains.

Late last week we learned that our **men's and women's cross country, women's golf and women's tennis** teams won NCAA Public Recognition Awards for their players' academic success during the 2016-17 school year. The awards are presented to Division I teams with academic progress rates ranking in the top 10

percent of all squads in their respective sports.

And if this level of academic prowess is not impressive enough, let's not forget that the women's cross country team claimed its second Horizon League championship in a row, and that the women's golf team finished among the top three squads at five of its eight tournament appearances.

Meanwhile the women's tennis team finished fifth in the league and posted a 7-0 shutout against Florida A&M. Last but not least, Bryce Stroede became the Horizon League's first-ever, men's cross country individual champion.

DUST, SWEAT AND PEERS

For the ninth year running, a group of **11 OU students** passed on summer break leisure opportunities in favor of traveling to Israel to take part in a three-week, full-scale archeological excavation.

They joined Dr. Mike Pytlik, director of our Judaic Studies program, and Dr. Jon Carroll, assistant professor of anthropology, on a trip to Lachish – located about 35 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Dr. Pytlik assures us that the students were not treated to a cozy sight-seeing tour. Rather, they braved intense heat and worked long days to help distinguished scholars and fellow students from sister universities dig through layers of history to unravel mysteries dating back to pre-Biblical times.

As part of their immersive learning experience, the students were searching for buried outer walls of this key historical site, the discovery of which would give us insight into which ancient king succeeded in fortifying Lachish.



*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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