

President Russi

OU and MSU Joint Programs in Social Work Signing Ceremony

*August 28, 2006*

On behalf of our students, faculty, staff and trustees, welcome again to Oakland University and historic Meadow Brook Hall.

I would like to introduce one of our trustees who is here with us today . . . Trustee Penny Crissman, would you please be recognized?

The building we are meeting in today was built and lived in by an incredible woman, Matilda Dodge Wilson, who with her husband Alfred had the vision to bring a university to Oakland County.

Matilda was active politically, supported social and community causes, and was passionate about higher education.

And, she knew how to enlist the support of good friends, such as John Hannah and Woody Varner at MSU, who helped bring her vision to reality.

And while OU matured to earn autonomy in 1970, we have never forgotten our roots.

Today, we celebrate a brand new partnership with Michigan State that will enhance both of our schools and southeastern Michigan as a whole.

The signing of today's agreement brings new opportunities to Oakland County students.

It allows Michigan State to broaden access to its outstanding social work programs in our region and it allows Oakland students to gain a distinctive social work education.

Sharing knowledge and resources in this way is good for our students, good for our community and good for our state . . . a state that must look to higher education for leadership in economic development and recovery.

On the eve of Oakland University's 50th anniversary next year, I would like to thank our colleagues at Michigan State for once again partnering with us. It is a partnership that stands to benefit a lot of people for many years to come.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that we will next gather with our colleagues from Michigan State this winter in East Lansing when Coach Kampe's Golden Grizzlies take on Coach Izzo's Spartans on the hard-court.

I am looking forward to sharing that experience with my colleague of many years and one of Michigan State's staunchest supporters ... MSU's longtime provost and newest president, Lou

Anna Simon, whose father-in-law was present at MSU-Oakland's groundbreaking with Mrs. Wilson.