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## Farewell Jackie Wiggins: SMTD founding director to retire after 24-year career at OU

On June 30, Distinguished Professor of Music Education Jackie Wiggins will bid a fond farewell to Oakland University and the School of Music, Theatre and Dance where she has mentored and inspired students, scholars and artists for nearly 24 years.

"I'm going to miss the people the most," said Wiggins, founding director of the SMTD and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "They're amazing people. Everyone here is committed to our students, to teaching, and to what our mission is."

Wiggins led the university's music program and then the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance from 1997 through the founding of the School of Music, Theatre and Dance in 2017, and has served as the school's first director since that time.

Under her leadership, the department grew from about 40 students to about 400 students; developed and launched nine new degree programs, including the B.F.A. programs in theatre and dance in 2008 and a Ph.D. in music education in 2006; sought and successfully achieved accreditation by the National Associations of Music, Theatre and Dance in 2001; and was awarded the Oakland University Assessment Award in 2009 and 2015.

"I'm very proud to have been a part of establishing what we have at Oakland University," said Wiggins, who holds degrees in music education from Queens College of the City University of New York and the University of Illinois.

Prior to her arrival at Oakland in 1994, Wiggins taught general and choral music in New York public schools for more than 20 years.



*After a 24-year career at Oakland University, Distinguished Professor of Music Education Jackie Wiggins will bid a fond farewell to the School of Music, Theatre and Dance on June 30, 2018.*



*Wiggins at a retirement celebration on April 3*

"What drew me to Oakland University was the amazing potential I saw here," she said. "At the time, Oakland was relatively new school. It wasn't steeped in tradition, and I liked that because I have kind of a cutting edge, different view of looking at my field. I knew I could come to OU and establish the kind of program I wanted to have."

Internationally known for her work in constructivist music education and children's musical creative process, Wiggins is also a prolific author and active presenter. Her professional work includes more than 50 publications, more than 200 presentations, and invited keynotes on four continents, including the National Conference of the Australian Society of Music Education (2009), the International Conference for Research in Music Education (RIME 2011), the Asia-Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research in Taipei, and Musichildren'17 in Aveiro, Portugal (2017).

She has also written several book chapters and numerous journal articles dealing with topics such as constructivist music education practice, the nature of musical understanding, creative process in the music classroom, and technology in the music classroom. Recent book chapters include "Musical Agency," in *The Child As Musician: A Handbook of Musical Development* (2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 2016); "Teaching Music with a Social Constructivist Vision of Learning," in *Approaches to Teaching General Music: Methods, Issues, and Viewpoints*. (Oxford University Press, 2012); "Creating in Music Learning Contexts" (with Magne Espeland) in the *Oxford Handbook of Music Education* (2012); "Scaffolding Student Composers," (with Michael Medvinsky) in *Composing Our Future: Preparing Music Educators to Teach Composition* (Oxford University Press, 2012); and "When the Music Is Theirs: Scaffolding Young Songwriters,"

*Cultural Psychology for Music Education* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

“For me, music and education have been lifelong passions,” Wiggins said. “If you’re an artist, you’ve always been an artist. If you’re a dancer, you’ve always loved to move. And if you musician, there’s always music in your head. Well, there’s always been music in my head. It’s just part of who I am. And empowering others to find and value the music and musical understandings within them is a wonderful, rewarding life to live. Teaching — fostering learning in others — is also part of who I am.”