

From the Office of the
President

Points of Pride

Colleagues,

Our culture is full of references that speak to the advantages of supporting one another and giving back. Music is a hotbed for such thoughts, for example, as we see in popular songs like "Lean on Me," "With a Little Help From my Friends" and "That's What Friends are For." All of us have often heard similar colloquialisms such as "A friend in need is a friend indeed," "I've got your back" and "I'm there for you."

I think it is beautiful that there are so many ways we express the idea of looking out for each other, but I find it exhilarating to learn about people who dedicate their lives to doing so. Here are just a few OU alumni who have made that choice.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

SHOW ME THE WAY

The college experience of recent OU alumna **Cassie Hock** demonstrates that when universities offer innovative student support services and students take advantage of them, everyone wins.

A member of the first group of freshmen to have access to support offered by the [First Year Advising Center](#) (FYAC) in 2012, Cassie struggled with difficult decisions after pursuing an academic major that she felt didn't fit her life goals.

Determination and help from the FYAC led to her switching her major to human resource development. More comfortable with this choice, Cassie was empowered to the point that she was able to also serve as president of the Student Program Board, as an Orientation Group Leader and, notably, as a Board of Trustees Student Liaison.

Cassie graduated in May and is now enrolled in the Mortuary Science Program at Wayne State. She is building a sound foundation on which to realize her ultimate goal of one day owning a funeral home and helping others overcome loss. Congratulations to both Cassie and the FYAC for working hard and keeping their eyes on the path to success!



I'LL KEEP YOU WARM



Even while excelling as a standout soccer player here at OU, **Nicholas Kristock** knew that he wanted to dedicate his life and work to making the world a better place for others.

Nich says that both the [School of Business Administration](#) and a position with the Office of [Disability Support Services](#) provided him with excellent opportunities to learn and to acquire the tools he would need to help make that dream a reality.

Today, this ambitious alumnus serves as executive director of [Fleece & Thank You](#), a non-profit organization he founded to provide fleece blankets to children in extended stays at hospitals. He founded two other service organizations prior to this and has volunteered with a number of non-profit, humanitarian organizations. Kudos to Nich and the OU faculty and staff that helped propel him toward the fantastic work he is now doing!

CATCH MY FALL

OU alumnus **Gary Wozniak** has worked hard to realize great career success over the years, but readily and admirably affirms that he has discovered a great deal of strength and resolve with the support of others.

Gary is the executive manager of [RecoveryPark](#), a non-profit organization he founded in Detroit to pursue an ambitious plan to create jobs for challenged workers, provide a locally sourced outlet for fresh food in the city, revitalize a historic downtown neighborhood and help create walkable communities.

Gary describes the RecoveryPark venture as a way to give back to the recovering community, which he says "has given me my life."

Given his firsthand experience in the power of collaboration and mutual support, it should not come as any surprise that Gary has helped enlist more than 100 governmental, non-profit and private sector organizations to back the RecoveryPark effort. I applaud what is sure to be a winning strategy!



*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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