

**Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
October 14, 2019**

**APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE FOR JOANNE FEY DANTO
A Recommendation**

1. **Division and Department:** Academic Affairs, Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
2. **Introduction:** In accordance with Article IX of the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, honorary degrees may be awarded by the Board of Trustees in recognition of distinguished accomplishment and service within the scope of the arts and letters, sciences, professions, and public service as recognized and supported by the University. The awarding of honorary degrees reaffirms Oakland University's scholarly, creative, and humanitarian values and ties the University to the community at large.

Joanne Danto is a retired ballet dancer and full-time philanthropist. The Honorary Degree Committee is impressed with her professional success and her long-time history of philanthropy in Michigan. Danto is a Detroit native who had a highly prestigious international career as a ballet dancer, which included a stint as the Principal Dancer with the Joffrey Ballet in New York. She also performed as a lead with the Joffrey Ballet of Washington, the National Ballet in Washington, the Frankfurt Ballet in Germany, and the Pennsylvania Ballet in Philadelphia. Ms. Danto was considered one of the most important dancers of her generation. She has taught ballet at the National Ballet Academy in California, the University of Michigan, the Interlochen Arts Academy, and Point Park College among others. Danto also studied Art History at Oakland University. Danto's family has long been a leader in arts and educational philanthropy in Michigan. She currently serves as Vice-President, Secretary, and Trustee of the Marvin I. and Betty J. Danto Family Foundation. Among her family's philanthropic activities are:

- Michigan Opera Theatre
- The University of Michigan to fund scleroderma and cardiovascular research
- Wayne State University for the construction of an engineering center


Ms. Danto regularly assists the Michigan Opera Theatre in selecting projects to be funded by her family's foundation. Additionally, her personal philanthropy has included gifts benefitting:

- The Cranbrook Educational Community
- The Interlochen Center for the Arts
- The Detroit Institute of Art
- The Michigan Opera Theatre
- Wayne State University Department of Theatre and Dance

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3. **Previous Board Action:** The Board of Trustees periodically awards honorary degrees at its Formal Sessions.
4. **Budget Implications:** None.
5. **Educational Implications:** The awarding of honorary degrees is an established tradition in academe, by which the University reaffirms its scholarly, creative, and humanitarian values and its ties to the wider community.
6. **Personnel Implications:** None.
7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost has recommended approval of the recipient to receive an Honorary Degree.
8. **Recommendation** RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Arts *Honoris Causa* to Joanne Fey Danto.
9. **Attachments:** None.

Submitted to the President
on 10/08, 2019 by


James P. Lentini, D.M.A.
Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommended on 10/10, 2019
to the Board for Approval by


Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President