

**Agendum  
Oakland University  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
February 7, 2022**

**APPROVAL OF HONORARY DEGREE FOR STEVEN KAHN  
A Recommendation**

1. **Division and Department:** Academic Affairs, Office of the Executive 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.

Dr. Kahn earned a Bachelor of Science in mathematics at Stony Brook University, and a Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Maryland before moving to Detroit and joining Wayne State University in 1981 as a professor of mathematics. During his early years as a professor, he taught college courses during the day and, in the evenings, volunteered his time at the high school development center, where he worked with students who were expelled from their high schools. Dr. Kahn spent five years working with approximately 20 students, but soon realized that more could be done to meet the needs of at-risk students in Detroit.

Dr. Kahn partnered with Leonard Boehm to form Math Corps in 1991. Together, they created a combined academic and mentoring program for Detroit Public Schools, designed to provide support for students as they pursue their education from elementary and middle school through high school and, ultimately, college. The cornerstone programs include Math Corps, which provides a summer camp, year-round Saturday programs and enrichment courses for middle and high school students, and at the college level, the WSU Emerging Scholars Program.

While the foundation of Math Corps includes teaching math skills, its mission has always been about much more. Using his experience in working with the youth of Detroit, Dr. Kahn intentionally built a tuition-free program that would have the greatest impact on the lives of at-risk youth. First, it is not a one-year or two-year program; it is a program that supports participants throughout their entire educational career and beyond. The core of the program is that every child has greatness within them. Dr. Kahn and his team work hard to build a curriculum that teaches kids that they matter. Great emphasis is placed upon love, kindness, courage, and a sense of community. For many, the program becomes a second family. For some, it becomes their first family.

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Dr. Kahn's success in building Math Corps into an effective program cannot be overstated. Math Corps currently serves 400 children every summer, and that number is growing. On average, students who enter the program improve basic math skills by 60%. Additionally, students who attend the program for three years have an average ACT test score over 20, four points higher than the average student test score in Detroit Public Schools. Many graduates of the program go on to complete college. A large number return to Math Corps to serve as mentors, teachers, and tutors to current participants. Some have even joined the education staff at Wayne State University.

Dr. Kahn and Math Corps have received multiple awards, including national recognition for positively impacting children in Detroit. Dr. Kahn received the Distinguished College or University Teaching Award from the Mathematical Association of America-Michigan and was a finalist for the Spirit of Community Award from Wayne State University. In 2016, Math Corps was awarded the NY Life Foundation's coveted Excellence in Summer Learning Award. That same year, the National Science Foundation awarded Math Corps nearly \$3 million to replicate its summer program nationwide.

The impact of Dr. Kahn's leadership and service has made, and continues to make, an important difference for thousands of children and families in Detroit. His passion for helping others and growing Math Corps has turned into a lifelong mission that inspires others to get involved and give back. This enduring commitment has enabled Math Corps to expand beyond the boundaries of Detroit to a partnership with Oakland University that will benefit the children of Pontiac. Dr. Kahn has distinguished himself as a leader in education and in several communities. For his many outstanding achievements and commitment to serving others, Dr. Kahn is most deserving of the conferral of an honorary degree from Oakland University.

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 Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost has recommended approval of the recipient to receive an Honorary Degree.

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8. Recommendation

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Science *Honoris Causa* to Steven Kahn.

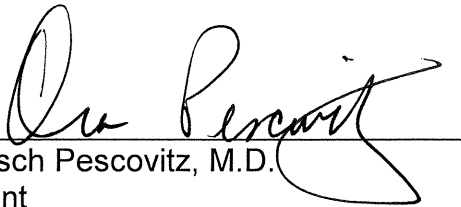
9. Attachments: None.

Submitted to the President  
on 2/3, 2022 by



Britt Rios-Ellis, M.S., Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for  
Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommended on 2/4, 2022  
to the Board for approval by



Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.  
President

Reviewed by

