

2016-17 | *Year in Review*

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OAKLAND UNIVERSITY and the  
PONTIAC COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER

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# UNITING URBAN ACHIEVEMENT AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



# ENGAGING TOGETHER



The initiatives of our remarkable partnership have been determined by the goals of the city's strategic vision as outlined in the Economic Recovery Plan: Pontiac Moving Forward. Three years of a mutual willingness to work together on a shared vision have produced many accomplishments, which have benefitted every sector of the Pontiac community.

I salute OU's new president, Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D., and am impressed that she embraces the tenets of community outreach that are the hallmarks of our partnership. From our brief encounters, as well as the indirect communications through the OU partner representatives, I am assured that she will continue to endow this relationship with the infrastructure support it will need to have sustainability. As mayor, I pledge to do the same.

Let's all commend CORE team leaders of both institutions, the steering committee members and all those many other participants whose efforts and belief in the vision have contributed to making this partnership grow and thrive.

**Deirdre Waterman**  
Mayor  
Pontiac, Michigan



Oakland University has been pleased in recent years to help create collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with leaders of revitalization efforts in Pontiac.

With the same spirit of enthusiasm, I look forward to putting my experience here at Oakland to work in guiding future engagement efforts with the city. Over the course of my 23 years of serving Oakland, I have formed many close personal and professional relationships in the community.

Like many of the individuals I have met while taking part in our educationally focused engagement initiatives, I care deeply about young people. I know they have passions and dreams that we cannot afford to ignore. I want the programs we offer Pontiac's K-12 students to optimally build their academic, social and other essential life skills. I want to help fully prepare these students to enter college and explore, pursue and confidently take advantage of all of the opportunities waiting for them. We need to invest in their futures because their aspirations are the underpinnings of our sustainable future.

I find it inspiring that we can also invite both current and future OU students to engage in our community engagement initiatives. Their involvement will expand and significantly enhance the quality of their learning experiences, as well as help Pontiac students and community members create new avenues of growth and progress for the city. The various efforts in our six focus areas will provide well-rounded opportunities for our faculty, staff and students to work with our community partners.

I know that with the collective determination, expertise, planning and work ethic we bring to bear, there is no challenge standing before us that we cannot overcome. Working together, we can make an impact in the revitalization of the City of Pontiac.

**Glenn McIntosh**  
Vice President for Student Affairs and Diversity  
Oakland University



Community engagement is an important element of our mission at Oakland University. We rely on partnerships with community businesses, educational institutions, local governments, and corporate entities to build mutually beneficial relationships. These partnerships allow opportunities for our students and faculty to engage in meaningful service learning experiences ranging from research projects that promote healthy living to expanding educational opportunities for citizens from all backgrounds and economic means. As a public research university committed to serving our region, we provide access to faculty knowledge in areas that include STEM disciplines, health professions, and medicine. Oakland University also serves as a destination for arts and culture, and through our commitment to outreach, we collaborate with our partners to share expertise and talent with surrounding communities.

Partnerships and collaborations at Oakland University include those with automotive companies, the defense industry, medical and health centers, and philanthropic organizations. These partnerships have led to the creation of entities that include the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, The Michigan Cyber Range at the Macomb-OU Incubator Velocity Center, and the OU Autism Center. The mission of the Oakland University-Pontiac Partnership calls for an effort that unites urban achievement with academic excellence, advancing the vitality of Pontiac while enhancing experiential learning opportunities for Oakland students. The initiative supports faculty research and promotes civic engagement in the community.

By working with our community partners, OU advances its mission to create meaningful and impactful learning experiences, while fulfilling its role as a research university to serve the public good.

**James P. Lentini**  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
Oakland University

# 2016-17 PROJECTS



## EDUCATION

### Expanded Partnership Between Pontiac Schools and School of Education and Human Services (SEHS)

SEHS has engaged with and looks forward to continuing to engage as collaborative partners in research and learning with the Pontiac School District (PSD) through its administrators, teachers, staff and students. SEHS looks to identify needs and seek solutions to further the success of Pontiac students. SEHS will marshal resources available toward supporting initiatives that will advance district goals and learning by Oakland University (OU) students and faculty. SEHS will look to broaden the knowledge base of district personnel and stakeholders, as well as explore grant opportunities that may bring funding for collaborative projects. In each of these, our goal continues to be the advancement of mutual learning, respect, and success. The goals of the Whitman Human Resource Center (WHRC) Collaborative meetings are seeking to align resources with needs, explore opportunities to be of service, coordinate schedules to maximize access, address collaborative barriers, promote faculty research opportunities and encourage feedback from stakeholders.

### Parent University

Parent University is a collaboration between PSD and OU to help parents become partners in their child's education. This collaboration works to connect parents to resources and support partnerships of families, schools and communities. Parent University provides resources to the parents with teachers serving as the liaison between families and schools. During Fall 2016, primary objectives for Parent University involved 1) recruiting instructors, 2) conducting courses with parents, and 3) obtaining feedback to better understand parents' needs. Course content was in one of five areas: health and wellness, navigating the educational system, personal growth and development, career development and effective parenting.

### Spanish Translations and After School Tutoring

Dr. Cecilia Saenz-Roby and Laura McCarthy of the Modern Languages Department worked with Pontiac Youth Assistance to translate their member brochure into Spanish. Dr. Saenz-Roby and her students also worked with the Hispanic Outreach Center in Pontiac to translate a 14-page College 101 document, with Centro Multicultural La Familia to translate their youth Mental Health First Aid brochure and with PSD in translating

parent letters. These tasks give OU students authentic translation experiences and help community organizations who do not have the capacity for translation. *(photo 1)*

### Teen Mother Assistance Program

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) community engagement grant awarded to Professor Kanako Taku will be used to develop a new educational intervention program to assist teenage parents at Pontiac High School (PHS). "This project is important because PHS has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy in Michigan," Dr. Taku said. "This grant will allow us to not only provide valuable resources to a special population desperately in need, but also to gather data regarding the efficiency of the program so that it can be continually improved to best fit the needs of the population."

Participants must be at least 13 years old, pregnant or a teen mom, and be a student at PHS. "The program will provide resources and allow the teens to connect with each other," Dr. Taku said. "They will also learn about the importance of social support, and highlight non-traditional means of support, such as through community programs and pets." This project is a collaboration initiated by Shelby Seyburn with Whitney Dominick, graduate students at OU, Aundrea Walenski, a graduate student at U of M, Leah McDiarmid, a graduate student at EMU, and Velinka Marton, an undergraduate student at OU.

### PCT Certification Course Graduating Class

Students of PHS became the first graduating class of the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program offered through OU School of Nursing (SON) Continuing Education. Eighteen students graduated the PCT program in December 2016 with an average GPA of 3.0 and 100 percent graduation rate. The 21 students currently enrolled graduated in November 2017.

Students attend class in the morning at OU SON Continuing Education Focus Hope location and in the afternoon at PHS. "This is a unique opportunity for students to be ready for the healthcare workforce before they graduate high school," stated Teresa Rodges, Executive Director. Students' clinical rotations are offered at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland in Pontiac, Michigan. After graduation, students will have the opportunity to take certification exams in Phlebotomy, EKG, Certified Nurse Aide and Patient Care Technician and are recruited for available positions at local hospitals and facilities. *(photos 2 and 3)*

### Community-based SAT Prep Program

OU received a grant from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan to create a community cohort for SAT Prep programs during out-of-school times. The purpose of the program is to increase SAT scores of Pontiac students and create a city-wide college-going culture. The program included identifying community leaders and host sites and holding community meetings. Dr. Danielle Ligocki, SEHS, assisted in the Khan Academy training of community members and provided additional resources as needed. The OU AmeriCorps VISTA conducted community meetings and site visits, created and analyzed program evaluations and also provided college readiness resources via weekly email communications. Community members, students, parents, and site volunteers from various backgrounds participate throughout Pontiac and value the benefits of these programs. To date, 10 community host sites and approximately 75 students have participated in the program. *(photos 4 and 5)*

### Pre-Algebra "Math" Program

OU received a grant from the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan to continue our efforts for an ongoing pre-algebra math program, which is being spearheaded under OU's Pre-College Programs office. The Pre-Algebra program is composed of two complementary programs: The summer residential program is a 4-day residential camp on OU's campus for rising 8th graders. The Saturday math academy consists of two, five-week sessions for 7th graders to strengthen math skills and prepare for 8th grade algebra. The goal of the math program is to improve proficiency in math and literacy for middle school students in the PSD. While part of this program, students participate in workshops and activities designed to build skills related to college readiness and personal growth. These workshops are designed and implemented by the Pre-College Program's assistant director and staff and include a campus tour, college student panel, and college financial planning and admission requirements.

### GEAR UP Awards \$198,350 in Scholarships

OU MI GEAR UP awarded 66 students from the class of 2017 with scholarships totaling \$198,350.00. These students attended Pontiac High School and International Technology Academy and have been in the MI GEAR UP program since the 7th grade. In the last six years, the students have participated in numerous academic, social, career and cultural awareness activities that have focused on preparing them for life after graduation and beyond.

### Project Upward Bound (PUB) Continued Excellence

In 2016-17, the PUB College Prep Academy at OU met or exceeded its objectives which focus on grade point average improvement, math and reading proficiency, high school graduation with a rigorous curriculum and regular diploma, postsecondary entry, and postsecondary completion. PUB partnered with the Department of Industrial and System Engineering (OU-ISE) on a \$10K grant from AT&T to introduce Pontiac students to STEM. Additionally, PUB earned its own grant award totaling more than \$3 million over the next five years which will be used to continue to serve Pontiac students. PUB initiated the idea to pilot a Peer Coach Training Course, along with the agreement of Khan Academy (KA). With completion, PUB Scholars will earn certification as a KA Peer Coach. Subsequently, in effort to integrate Khan into Pontiac School District, PUB/KA Peer Coaches will coach their Pontiac peers in the use of KA. KA will monitor progress to consider duplicating the course nationwide.

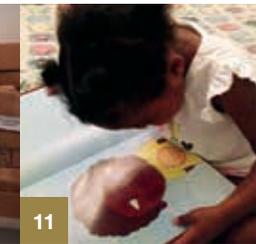
### The Effects of Reality TV on Children

Professor Danielle Ligocki (SEHS) worked with Sylvia Sturgis at the ITA in Pontiac for her research into reality television and its effects on young people. She spent time working with focus groups as well as conducting interviews with 7th grade participants as a means to greater understand their relationship with reality television and other forms of social media. This work will inform her research regarding the need for critical media literacy in schools.

### Early Childhood Collaborative

Faculty from Religious Studies, the SEHS and the William Beaumont School of Medicine have partnered with Pastor Douglas Jones of Welcome Missionary Baptist Church to further the vision of the late Hubert Price, Jr. for mobilizing action around early childhood education. A series of discussions have been held engaging leaders from religious, educational, and other organizations to improve access to quality, early childhood education. The collaboration also resulted in a workshop and application for a "Raising Places: Building Child-Centered Communities" planning grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. With the Reggio Children and University of Michigan Children's Centers, a Pop-Up Preschool from the University of Michigan-Flint was part of the Church in the Park health fair event on July 28, 2017. Partners collaborated for the pop-up preschool event to distribute 100 free books, free health screenings for children under five along with developmental milestones wheels and information about the Head Start program. *(photo 6)*

## 2016-17 PROJECTS



### HC 1000 Making Discoveries

"HC1000 Making Discoveries," the Honors College freshman colloquium class, conducted its service largely in Pontiac throughout the fall semester. The class, which had over 380 students in it, has a service component each year and a range of the student groups (last year there were 28 groups) within the class (14 or so students per group and an upperclassman as a TA) conduct their service in Pontiac.

### Honors College Shadow Day with International Technology Academy (ITA)

ITA students visited campus to shadow Honors College students to classes and to listen to presentations by Honors College seniors about their senior projects. Students and staff joined us for lunch. This was a collaboration between the Honors College and Graduate Studies. Senior Honors College students, Anders Engnell and Trevor Evans presented their thesis projects to the gathered ITA student group. Dr. Michel, the Honors College faculty fellow and Jason Sckrabulis, Honors College graduate assistant led the way, along with Sherry Quinn, OU graduate recruiter. Travus Burton, Oakland University's Experiential Learning Coordinator, assisted the project with excellent ideas about how to develop service learning opportunities. We're looking to expand on this collaboration in 2017-2018.

### Pontiac School District Joins Galileo Project

Earlier this year the Pontiac School District joined the Galileo Teacher Leadership consortium that includes 35 school districts and community colleges in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties. The four pioneering Pontiac Galileo Leaders began their Galileo Academy experience with more than 100 new leaders at a two-day retreat in Northern Michigan in late June. Since its founding in 1997, the Galileo project has provided more than 1,000 teachers with an intense two-year experience designed to help them become effective leaders in their classrooms, schools and school districts. The consortium is closely affiliated with the Galileo Institute for Teacher Leadership at Oakland University.

### Alcott Elementary Library Media Center Project/ERL Support

In fall 2016, Alcott Elementary was notified that they received the James Patterson library grant that they applied for last May. This was a collaborative grant application between Alcott and SEHS faculty. The grant will assist Alcott in updating their book collection and adding technology. This collaboration began in October 2014, when the principal and some volunteers at Alcott sought advice from the OU Educational Resources Lab (ERL) about the steps they would need to take to get the school library media center in order and operational. There had not been a

library professional on staff at Alcott for some time. There were many donated books that could not be added to the collection and they did not even know if an online catalog or inventory of books existed. There was no means for circulating any materials to teachers or students. SEHS faculty, Julie Chapie, Educational Technology Specialist for the ERL, Amanda Nichols Hess, Education Librarian from Kresge Library, Barbara Begin Campbell, Coordinator and Youth Reference Librarian for the ERL worked with the partnership team to facilitate a meeting which included staff from Oakland Schools and Alcott administration/volunteers to build bridges and empower the volunteers and staff of Alcott. Ms. Barb Linnenbrink at Alcott trained 5th and 6th grade students to be library helpers, facilitating the circulation of materials for all the classes.

### OU-Pontiac Service Learning Opportunities

Dr. Tanya Christ and Ms. Jennifer Dean from Alcott Elementary in Pontiac collaborated to design two new undergraduate service-learning courses to provide weekly on-site learning experiences for undergraduate preservice teachers and additional support for literacy assessment and instruction for Alcott K-5 students. These courses, in addition to those that are regularly offered at the Baldwin Center in Pontiac, resulted in 76 OU undergraduate preservice teachers working with 216 K-5 Pontiac children for a total of 518 literacy learning hours. Aligned with this experience, OU preservice teachers hosted or participated in family literacy nights at both Alcott Elementary and the Baldwin Center. We are grateful to Dr. Dawn Henretty (OU graduate) for teaching two of these courses, and Ms. Angela Tabb from the Baldwin Center for her ongoing collaboration to make these service-learning courses a success for all! (photo 7)

### The Facing Project

As part of the ongoing effort to expand the OU/Pontiac initiative service-learning opportunities for OU students, Dr. Tanya Christ led a Service-Learning Design, Practice, and Scholarship Learning Community across the 2016-17 school year. OU faculty and staff (Katie Jostock, Jennifer Coon, Barb Campbell, Travus Burton, Jess Tess-Navarro, Sheryl Ruskiewicz, Holly Carruthers, Anica Bowe) met and discussed their current service-learning work in Pontiac and generated ideas to improve this work. Next year, the group will launch the Facing Project (<http://facingproject.com>) as a way to learn more about the Pontiac community with the goal of generating new ideas for more meaningful service-learning collaborations. We are hoping this will help build more understanding and collaboration across our OU and Pontiac communities. (photo 8)

### Teacher Education Students at International Technology Academy

In March 2017, OU teacher candidates who enrolled in an Elementary Mathematics Methods course with Dr. Ji-Eun Lee had the opportunity to conduct one-on-one assessment interviews with Mrs. Kim Quarles' 4th grade students at ITA. While interacting with students, OU teacher candidates practiced and refined their skills of eliciting and interpreting individual student thinking. Mrs. Quarles joined our debriefing session and provided helpful tips and suggestions. (photo 9)

### Book Drive

Dr. Tanya Christ worked with the OU Student Michigan Education Association (SMEA) to run a book-drive for an upcoming Pontiac Partnership Pop-Up Bookstore Event. Due to this successful drive, OU preservice teachers will get to practice their hands at matching books with readers at the OU Pontiac Pop-Up Bookstore Event, part of the Pontiac Pop-Up Festival organized by Dr. Jennifer Lucarelli, School of Health Sciences (SHS). (photo 10)

### Growing Database for Culturally Relevant Books

Culturally relevant texts improve literacy outcomes, motivation, and identity formation. However, finding culturally relevant texts for urban African-American and Latino students in the northern U.S. can be time consuming and difficult, given that the market is dominated by books portraying/written by predominantly Caucasian characters/authors. Dr. Tanya Christ and Ms. Megan Lauinger (MAT) have been collecting titles of culturally relevant texts that were successfully used for instruction in Pontiac across service-learning courses for the past few years in hopes of developing a resource to help Pontiac preservice and inservice teachers more easily find appropriate culturally relevant texts for use in their classrooms. Parker Simmons (now an alumni) helped to catalog these books on a new website, which we hope to get funding to expand and finish across the next few years. (photo 11)

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### Suicide Awareness Event

The Political Science and Religious Studies Department, as well as the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, collaborated to host an interactive panel discussion surrounding a proposed law in Michigan to make physician-assisted suicide legal. Professor Dulio from Political Science noted the bill's introduction in 2016 and began working to set up a panel along with Professor Alan Epstein from Religious Studies. The panel included one of the bill's sponsors, State Representative Tom Cochran, Jason B. Negri, Assistant

Director of the Patients Rights Council and four OU faculty members: Charles Mabee from Christianity Studies, Jay Meehan from Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work and Criminal Justice, and Amy DeBaets and Jason Wasserman from the OUWB School of Medicine. The event drew nearly 150 students, faculty, staff, and members of the community (individuals residing in Pontiac communities were specifically invited) to campus for a discussion of important issues in a civil, respectful, and deliberative manner. (photo 12)

### Election Overview at International Technology Academy (ITA)

Over 100 students from ITA were at the 2016 Campaign Roundup, which featured an expertise panel that analyzed election results and how outcomes will impact public policy and government in the future. Panelists included Chuck Stokes from WXYZ Channel 7 and Bernie Porn from Lansing-based polling firm EPIC-MRA, along with OU faculty members Dr. David Dulio, Dr. Terri Towner and Dr. John Klemanski. This year marked the first time the event was held in Pontiac. "We decided to shake things up a bit and 'take the show on the road'. Given OU's partnership with Pontiac, there was no better place to have it than the city," said Dr. Dulio, Political Science department chair. "We are deeply appreciative that the ITA allowed us to come in and spend some time with their students. The discussion was terrific and I was incredibly impressed with the nuanced questions the students asked." (photo 13)

### PARL Strategic Planning Session

OU's Public Affairs Research Laboratory (PARL) hosted a strategic planning session for The Art Experience, a community art studio in Pontiac on campus in February. Board and staff members revisited the nonprofit's mission, vision, and created a list of first steps toward a new three-year plan for moving forward.

### SMART Transportation Study

As her capstone project, Master of Public Administration (MPA) student Stacey Smith conducted an accessibility study of public transportation options for the city during Fall 2016. She analyzed SMART data to identify specific transportation needs and barriers to accessing essential services, issuing a series of short-, intermediate- and long-term recommendations for improving mobility. The following semester, MPA student Anna Markiewicz worked with SMART toward redeveloping Pontiac's Community Partnership Program, creating a strategy for engaging residents and key stakeholders in order to understand citizen needs.

## 2016-17 PROJECTS



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### BUSINESS, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

#### OU Initiates Workforce Development Network

Oakland University has served as facilitator and co-convenor for the workforce development group which consists of an engaged group of cross-sector partners in the workforce arena who have met for the past year to build relationships and problem solve issues around work for Pontiac residents. OU has been working with its higher education, business and nonprofit partners to streamline pathways to education, training, resources and work for Pontiac residents and employers.

#### AmeriCorps VISTA and Michigan Works

AmeriCorps VISTA Shakita Billy spent her service year working with our community partner, Michigan Works JobLink Center in Pontiac. The JobLink center brainstormed ways to work together to increase job awareness and improve community partners for specific segments of the population, including youth, recently returning veterans and basic-skills deficit residents. The AmeriCorps VISTA built capacity at Pontiac Michigan Works in a variety of ways including design of marketing materials, implementation of evaluation systems for employability workshops and program services, application of employability skills training curriculum for youth and adults, research and program design for a proposal to partner with the City of Pontiac for its new youth recreational millage, among others. She has also implemented solutions at JobLink and created partnerships with and pathways for local businesses to connect with the center, conducted landscape scans and created three directories: transportation services, adult work clothing resources and youth programs.

*“(This project) was an application of everything I knew already from my own career and applications of my education unrelated to my career, but to a larger extent. I’ve never participated in a group as diverse, engaged and passionate as those involved with the transportation project.”*

— Anna Markiewicz, MPA student, '17

#### Business Support for Pontiac

The School of Business Administration (SBA) is providing business support in Pontiac in a variety of ways. It created a Social Entrepreneurship course, taught by Marcus Harris, part-time faculty, open to Pontiac residents. SBA utilized the growing Pontiac community network to encourage students to enroll in the SBA summer camps and offered scholarships. Dean Mazzeo consulted with the Pontiac Regional Chamber, the Pontiac Downtown Business Association Main Street Pontiac, Flagstar Bank, the Oakland County Economic Development office and the Oakland County One Stop Shop Business Center and the OU/Pontiac Initiative Workforce Development Committee.

Lori Crose, Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) director, serves as a board member of the Pontiac Downtown Business Association (PDBA) Main Street Program, which expands her reach for business, economic development and workforce training opportunities and helps increase awareness of OU programs. Additionally, PDBA's Main Street Program accreditation requires a designee from education and as a board member, she is able to fill that requirement.

### HEALTH CARE AND WELLNESS

#### Healthy Pontiac, We Can! Improvements

Healthy Pontiac, We Can! (HPWC), is a coalition facilitated by Oakland County Health Division working to make Pontiac healthier by increasing free opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating for adults and youth. OU facilitates many HPWC initiatives through a 4-year, \$2.4 million dollar Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health grant received by Dr. Jennifer Lucarelli, Associate Professor in the School of Health Sciences and HPWC Chairperson. Recent REACH initiatives include:

- Aiding the opening of Pontiac produce markets, such as Sprout Fresh Food Store and four mobile markets, serving 15,000 lbs last year.
- Launching healthier corner stores to ensure accessible healthier food options.
- Launched a Healthy Bites program at Huron Foods and St. Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital's cafeteria, Mindful Choices on the Go!, to make choosing healthier foods easier for patrons.
- Developed a non-motorized transportation plan to make Pontiac more walkable and bikeable.
- Ongoing Sidewalk Audits assessing the walkability of more than 60 miles of Pontiac sidewalks to help prioritize city-wide sidewalk improvements.

- Held a “Take Back the Sidewalks” event on September 24th, 2016 and with the help of volunteers from the neighborhood surrounding Webster Elementary on Huron Street as well as Micah 6 Community, Oakland County Health Division, and OU, a whole city block was cleared.
- Installed 38 new bike racks in 25 different locations around the city in collaboration with the GM Cares program.
- 4,904 total students in Pontiac are now experiencing enhanced physical activity through Coordinated Approach to Child Health program (CATCH)-informed lessons, enhanced recess ideas, and new physical education equipment in physical education classes.
- More than 4,424 school children throughout the entire Pontiac School District now have access to enhanced lunchrooms, menus, and food service staff training via a unique taste-test toolkit.

Other initiatives supported by HPWC and the Oakland University partnership facilitated by Oakland County Health Division's Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 4x4 grants as well as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) grants, including:

- Assisting Oakland County Police Athletic League (PAL) to launch summer youth sports leagues, which served approximately 450 Pontiac youth in Summer 2017.
- Partnering with Meet Up and Eat Up to offer PAL pop-up sports at summer feeding locations, hosted 35 hour-long sessions per week in July and August.
- Received a grant from the US Soccer Foundation with matched funding from St. Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital to implement the Soccer for Success program, serving 90 children in 6 Pontiac Elementary Schools in Spring 2017.
- Organizing Walk with Leaders on Mondays at noon during the summer, offering an opportunity for residents to learn about Pontiac's history from local leaders while enjoying a walk downtown.
- Hosting pop-up fitness classes such as Yoga in the Park and Boot Camp.

#### Grant Targets Transportation-Related Enhancements

Pontiac was selected as one of 50 mid-size cities to receive a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Invest Health grant. The grant, awarded to Oakland County Health Division (OCHD), is designed to accelerate improvements in neighborhoods facing barriers to better health by bringing together diverse stakeholders. Cities formed five-member teams including

representatives from various community sectors. The Pontiac team includes representatives from OCHD, Oakland County Commissioner (Pontiac) David Bowman, Oakland County Economic and Community Development, Oakland University and St. Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital. The project strives to improve local transportation services and amenities through redevelopment and placemaking approaches along key transit routes in the city. Activities include: generating physical improvements at bus stops to improve image and safety; encouraging bicycling and walking by supporting sidewalk enhancements, bike lanes and; promoting utilization of public transit routes that lead to key destinations (parks, universities, job and health centers). *(photo 14)*

#### OUWB in Pontiac

OUWB hosted a healthy eating MyPlate station and First Aid Kits station at the Art Fish Fun Festival at Beaudette Park this summer, as well as a Beaumont Student Heart Check education table at the 15th Annual Healthy Affair in April. OUWB faculty and staff volunteered to serve as judges at the annual science fair at ITA in February. OUWB students, faculty, and staff volunteered on the OUWB Day of Service and Make a Difference Day at the Pontiac location of the Gleaners Community Food Bank. OUWB students have forged a relationship with the Gary Burnstein clinic to host monthly clinic hours in collaboration with Beaumont Family Medicine. Baldwin Center OUWB has served meals on a quarterly basis at the Baldwin Center for the past three years. Additionally, OUWB has taken part in special service activities including helping with GED preparation and organizing the clothing closet. Faculty and staff of the OUWB School of Medicine have received funding to develop an outreach program designed to inspire middle school age students to consider pursuing a career in medicine. This experiential learning program will begin in Fall 2017. *(photos 15-18)*

#### New SHS Service-Learning Course

OU School of Health Sciences (SHS) offered a Community Engaged Research Methods course in Summer 2017 where students gathered community data and input that will contribute to redevelopment of the Pontiac Parks and Recreation Master Plan in Fall 2017. This service-learning course model will be presented at the Lilly Teaching conference in Traverse City, Michigan in October 2017.

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### Camp RN Scholarship

OU's Camp RN scholarship was awarded to Pontiac Middle School eighth grader, Rebecca Murray because of her strong academic performance and wanting to become an orthopedic surgeon. The scholarship covers all of Camp RN's \$485 costs. Camp RN is a two-week pre-college program designed to help middle school students learn about nursing opportunities. Participants engaged in workshops such as: nursing forensics, biology, math, chemistry and also had an opportunity to learn CPR and first aid. Participants also utilized a human assessment laboratory to learn more about the human body. It is a very selective program that only admitted 25 students to the 2016 Summer program. At the end of the program, there is a competition where students are paired into groups, identify and research a topic, and then present to the SON faculty and staff. Rebecca's group won the competition and received a gift card award.

### Alcott Community Garden Initiative

Dr. Tanya Christ (OU) worked with third-grade teachers Ms. Tomlinson and Ms. Wright, and fifth-grade teacher Ms. Martini at Alcott Elementary to start window boxes in the classrooms and a 4 square-foot raised bed with flowers and vegetables in the atrium. The students knew how to successfully cultivate plants, and did an excellent job carefully planting them in the new bed. They are hoping to have a variety of peppers before school ends, and tomatoes when they return to school in the fall. (photo 19)

*"We learned that nonprofits have to be competitive with benefits compensation and to do that, they have to also be evaluated. So, we ordered that a wage study be conducted. The study showed that several staff members were grossly underpaid. We not only raised those staff members' compensations but raised wages four percent citywide."*

— **Kermit Williams**, cohort member and Pontiac City Councilman

## ARTS AND CULTURE

### Drumming Class at Alcott Elementary

Music program director Professor Deborah VanderLinde was at Alcott Elementary in Pontiac for an assembly on Thursday, March 23. For his Honors College project, music education senior Darren Anderregg undertook a year-long program working with the Pontiac students once a week, as co-leader of VanderLinde's sixth grade drumming group. The assembly was the culmination of that project. Dance company Take Root, co-directed by dance professors Thayer Jonutz and Ali Woerner also took part in the assembly. (photos 20 and 21)

*"I was able to watch students in my class improve drastically in their musical skills over the short time that we had them, and it makes me wish that they could have a routine music program (at their school). So many students had great musical ideas and skills that we wish we could have spent more time exploring."*

— **Darren Anderregg**, B.A. Music Education '17

### "Soul Food" Community Events

The Arts and Culture focus area and Pontiac Arts Commission initiated a new community event entitled Soul Food to provide encouragement through music. In January, the first Soul Food program occurred at Pontiac Creative Arts Center (PCAC), where groups shared their music, including Student Bob Schneeweis (piano), recent graduate Matt Dufresne (saxophone), OU Alumni Quincy Stewart (trumpet), GayeLynn McKinney (drums), Mark Stone (percussion), OU faculty George Stoffan (clarinet) and Miles Brown (bass). On Mother's Day, music was performed by OU faculty member Joan Hodva (cello), OU alumni Rick Matle (guitar) and Sheila Landis (voice).

In November, the OU African Ensemble and artist Paschal Yao Young presented a concert at the PCAC. Pontiac families also attended events at OU's Varner Hall, including the children's play Wiley and the Hairy Man, steel drum performance by legendary Trinidadian musician Ray Holman, and a jazz concert by OU alum and internationally renowned violinist Regina Carter. (photos 22 and 23)

*"I wish I knew all Pontiac had to offer when I was a freshman and not a graduating senior."*

— OU student, class of 2017

### Poetry Slam

OU Libraries collaborated with the Pontiac Public Library to host the "Pontiac Poetry Slam" on April 22, 2017. OU Libraries sponsored a poetry workshop lead by Poet Peter Markus as well as prizes for first and second place in the Slam.

## NEIGHBORHOODS AND NONPROFITS

### Nonprofit Coalition

The Capacity Building for Nonprofits and Neighborhoods initiative began with a seed idea at the Town Hall meeting November 2016. The breakout committee consisted of 12 people representing Pontiac nonprofits. Since then, the group has grown to 42 members on the email list. They have met twice at the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce and have begun to gather a list of nonprofits who work for the betterment of Pontiac citizens.

The main goal of the group is to create a collaborative where small and large nonprofits work together to eliminate service duplication and also to identify and fill the gaps that exist in needed services between agencies. Another major goal is to share resources on workshops or training services to help each other meet the business demands of running effective nonprofit organizations.

### Nonprofit Management Certification Program

OU's support for capacity building in Pontiac nonprofits came in the form of five scholarships to the newly launched Nonprofit Management Certificate program. The 2016 cohort collectively received over \$20,000 in tuition waivers to attend this yearlong nonprofit professional development training. The Pontiac scholarship recipients were: Norbert Burrows (Street Sweepers Team), Tamara Orza-Ramos (ICSE Michigan), Ryan Russell (PAL and Dream Center of Pontiac), Kermit Williams (High Place Community Outreach and Housing Development) and Cole Yoakum (Micah 6). Scholarships will again be offered for the next cohort. (photo 24)

### Perfect the Parks Day

On Saturday, April 15th, 2017, 126 volunteers from 17 different cities rallied at four major parks in Pontiac and redefined the meaning of public service. They rebuilt play structures, spread tons of mulch, filled dumpsters with trash and even repainted and sanitized park equipment. Oakland County unified around Pontiac Parks on this day. What an afternoon it was! Leaders of the Future (LF) is a nonprofit group started by OU alumni, Anders Engnell (class of '17), that combines service, community engagement and academics between OU and PSD students. (photo 25, on page 12)

### AkzoNobel Investing in Leaders of the Future (LF)

AkzoNobel, a multinational chemical and paint production company with a plant in Pontiac, invested \$100,000 in LF for the next two years. Roughly \$50,000 of this is for LF projects, and \$50,000 is for scholarships for LF Members. In spring 2017, five LF members were awarded two-year, \$5,000 a year scholarships for college or trade school. A few weeks later, LF and ReRoot combined efforts via a crowdfunding campaign called 'The Community Backyard on Home Street' and raised \$15,062 in five weeks. The funds were matched by Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The money will be used to develop a pocket park that will teach residents about agriculture and sustainability while increasing the biodiversity of the region to combat climate change, all while granting the families a place to relax and play. (photo 26 and 27, on page 12)

*"With the new understanding that this course exposed me to, I will be able to design relevant questionnaires and administer them to potential clients. The analyses should suggest which activities clients prefer and what success indicators should be as we carry out our mission to empower Latinos in advocating for themselves to secure a decent standard of life."*

— **Tamara Orza-Ramos**, CEO, Instituto Capacitacion Socioeconomica (ICSE) in Pontiac which aims to empower Hispanics as they try to improve their lives, with a focus on Puerto Ricans.

## 2016-17 PROJECTS



### Grizz Night

Grizz Night was developed to invite the students, faculty and staff of OU to visit their nearest urban community: Downtown Pontiac. Volunteers, students, business owners, faculty and staff all participated in planning the event. The pilot event has evolved into a program now run through the Main Street Pontiac and OU's Center for Student Activities Department. The program's goals are to create a showcase of the downtown, invite individuals to explore Downtown Pontiac and engage the Main Street community businesses. Between the spring and fall 2016 Grizz Night events, 350 individuals participated. Social media partnership hashtags captured the memories, while an OU student received a \$200 prize for winning a scavenger hunt. Mad Cow Leather and Saginaw Street Consignments reported sales made by students. On May 14, Main Street Pontiac received the 'Telling Your Story' award from Oakland County for their Grizz Night event. *(photo 28)*

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*"At first, many of our students, especially those from rural settings, were a bit hesitant in their interactions with our community partners as they were unsure of what to expect. Likewise many of the community participants were unsure how to interact with the "college kids." After a few tense interactions in the beginning, I feel the people in the community and our interns have come to realize that people are generally the same regardless of the place they live.*

*This cross-cultural exchange has helped to strengthen involvement on both sides."*

— **Jonathan Weyhrauch**, a.k.a. "Farmer Jon," OU Lecturer in Chemistry and Environmental Science and president of ReRoot Pontiac

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### Planting and Planning in Vacant Lots

Mushrooms, Peaches and Pears, Oh my! By the collective efforts of high school and college students and other Pontiac volunteers, a segment of Pontiac has been reclaimed, to the benefit of the environment and the community. Professor David Szlag (CHM) and Professor Scott Tiegs (BIO) work with Professor Jonathan Weyhrauch (CHM, Environmental Studies), a.k.a. "Farmer Jon" and president of ReRoot Pontiac in a variety of ways with this project. OU students who are involved gain valuable internship hours required to gain entry level positions upon graduation (two-five years' experience are needed to secure entry level jobs in the Environmental Science field). Some are promoted to manager positions, which helps to build their resumes. *(photo 29)*

In addition to the Leaders of the Future high school and college members, thirty-eight Pontiac students, ages 16-19, worked the site twice weekly during the summer as part of the OLSHA summer job program. In addition to planting trees, volunteers worked side by side to weed, dig wall trenches, level a patio area, excavate a shelter area, build apiaries and lay a base for garden lots and do whatever else needed to be done. They planted 1,300 fruit trees and berry bushes on 10 lots on Henderson street in Pontiac. These lots and others were previously abandoned and purposeless, but in a few years will be radiant with budding pear, peach and apple trees and fertile cherry, blackberry, and raspberry bushes as well as community gardens and mushroom lots.

### Pontiac Day at OU Basketball Game

On December 3, 2016, OU Athletics honored Pontiac and its leaders with "Pontiac Day" at a men's basketball game. Joining forces with the OU/Pontiac Initiative, athletics offered a discounted ticket rate for only Pontiac residents. The Golden Grizzlies welcomed hundreds of Pontiac residents and allowed Pontiac to showcase its talent, as residents Jeremy Medlock performed the National Anthem and Kendall Wright and Zaire Reed sang God Bless America during the pregame. During halftime, Pontiac Mayor Deirdre Waterman and OU's Dr. Robert Maxfield took center stage with an on-court ceremony to recognize the partnership of the OU/Pontiac Initiative and served as "honorary targets" for the "Mitten Toss"—a winter clothing drive held annually by OU Athletics. All items collected during the "Mitten Toss" were donated to the Baldwin Center of Pontiac. Two hundred free tickets were distributed to Pontiac school children and nonprofit clients due to the donations of Pontiac businesses. *(photo 30)*

### Annual Pontiac Bus Tour

The annual Pontiac bus tour is a deep dive into the community, aiming to blend the city's strong history with the challenges and opportunities as a post-industrial city on the mend. The second year trip was a success: it connected new faculty, deans and students to the Pontiac community for the purpose of research, internships and collaboration. A welcome by the mayor of the City of Pontiac at the City Hall and stops at the M1 Concourse, St. Joseph Mercy Oakland and the Strand Theater were trip highlights. The focus on medicine, technology, the OU SAE Formula vehicle on display and the hands-on view of 3D printing technology at Dasi Solutions showcased entrepreneurship in Pontiac, as well as the possibility for collaboration. *(photo 31, on page 14)*

### GM Modern Neighborhood Revitalization Projects

The revitalization of a subdivision consisting of 261 houses originally named the GM Modern Housing Corporation Addition has seen success this spring. Most of the houses are still intact and occupied but have seen some deterioration over time. Achievements to date include: Organization of the GM Modern Housing Neighborhood Association and regular monthly meetings; Major community cleanup of alley and empty lots; Identification of condemned houses for rehabilitation; Identification of seven houses for deconstruction and demolition; Stump removal and the planting of 44 trees; Initial planning for redevelopment of Oakland Park; Major Community Picnic (June 17); a grant received from the city for tree stump removal and tree planting. Dayne Thomas, Chair of the Pontiac Planning Commission and Gottfried Brieger, Professor emeritus, Oakland University collaborated on these projects. *(photo 32-34, on page 15)*

## ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

### Academic Service Learning Courses

OU faculty have been engaging the Pontiac community through service-learning for years. Service-Learning is a teaching method utilized where students benefit from applied learning opportunities in real world situations and genuine community partner needs are addressed through structured projects, research and new thinking. Several initiatives are currently underway at OU to provide faculty and students with new opportunities to continue interacting with and serving the Pontiac community in meaningful ways. Workshops in OU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning focus on providing faculty with resources and information on using best practices for community engagement. OU's Experiential Learning Coordinator Travus Burton works with faculty across campus on the development of multidisciplinary service

learning projects to address broader community needs while connecting with Pontiac nonprofit leaders and grassroots initiatives. The OU Facing Project will provide Pontiac residents with opportunities to tell their unique stories and allow OU to gain understanding.

### Eblast Overview

The eblast is an electronic newsletter that is sent monthly to anyone who signs up for it. The 497 member roster includes OU faculty, staff and students as well as community members and leaders; 93 of whom joined in the last year. Thirteen newsletters were sent this year, with an open rate ranging between 48-55% and the click rate for links ranging between 16-44. Content is submitted by campus and community and covers a wide range of events, community notices, program summaries, resources and links.

We utilized this strong e-network to share information about the Birmingham Unitarian Church Goldsmith Scholarship program, a \$2,000 renewable scholarship available only to Pontiac High School students and alumni, with great success. Last year, the Community Foundation for SE Michigan, the underwriter of the scholarship reported zero qualified applicants for the scholarship. However, our winter 2017 campaign resulted in two qualified applicants and three qualified renewals.

### Career Services Programs and Connections

OU Career Services is offering career-directed programs and connections to employers and alumni. The department also launched a new, innovative recruiting tool called Handshake that offers specialized career-development support to students to connect them with internship and employment opportunities. More than 45 employers posted 120 jobs in Pontiac alone this past academic year. Oakland County Government posted more than 25 jobs and internships across multiple departments for a variety of disciplines and competencies to support hiring initiatives in Pontiac. Career Services works with employers in all employment sectors to recruit talent by offering Career Fairs, jobs and internship postings, employer meet and greets, and alumni participation in career-directed programs. *(photo 35, on page 15)*

## 2016-17 PROJECTS



### Seasons of Service for Students

Organized by the Center for Student Activities and Leadership Development at Oakland University, more than 300 OU students volunteered at the Dream Center of Pontiac, Pontiac Habitat for Humanity ReStores, Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, Trunk or Treat in Downtown Pontiac, Pontiac Park Clean Up, Michigan Animal Rescue League (Pontiac), Grace Centers of Hope, Holiday Extravaganza (Christmas Parade and the WinterFUN Festival), Alcott Elementary School, and Gleaners Community Food Bank (Pontiac) over the 2016-2017 academic year. From January-April 2017, OU students volunteered at the Dream Center of Pontiac and Pontiac Habitat for Humanity ReStores for MLK Day of Service on January 28, 2017 and did an on-campus project for Gleaners Community Food Bank (Pontiac) for OU Day of Service on April 7, 2017 and Stress Less Day on April 18, 2017.

### Admissions and Grizz Visits

The Undergraduate Admissions Office at Oakland University has continued to strengthen its relationship with Pontiac. While maintaining yearly school visits, a Grizz Visit with Pontiac Academy of Excellence (PAE) was a new event for the year; the OU mascot along with current PAE students read a story aloud to elementary classrooms. Also, through increased partnership with Brittney Mitchell, an AdviseMI counselor, we have seen more applications and more admitted students this year than in 2016 or 2015. Our hope is that communication will continue to help us educate students about college and to admit as many qualified students as possible. (photo 36)

## OU COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## 2016-17 PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS RELATED TO PONTIAC PARTNERSHIP WORK

As a component of the Art and Practice of Medicine course for first year students, OUWB students teach a one-hour health lesson in Pontiac elementary schools. The outcomes of this work were presented at the 2016 Central Group on Educational Affairs annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Christ, T., Arya, P., \*Wen, W., and \*Liu, Y. (2017, April). Examining pre-service teachers' knowledge and action for digital literacies integration. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association Conference, San Antonio, TX.

Christ, T., \*Lauinger, M., \*Simmons, P. and, Arya, P. (2017, April). Using culturally relevant texts to enhance 21st century literacy instruction. Session presented at the annual meeting of the Michigan Reading Association, Grand Rapids, MI.

\*Baxa, J., and Christ, T. (2017, April). How effective is your use of technology in literacy instruction? Session presented at the annual meeting of the Michigan Reading Association, Grand Rapids, MI.

\*Designates OU student co-presenters

Katherine Body\*, Elizabeth Paré, Sarah Gilstorf\*, Jennifer Lucarelli. October 2016. "Here is where I gain weight: Influence of environmental factors and context in Hispanic-Latino Food and Physical Activity Culture." Poster presented at the Annual American Public Health Association Conference. Denver, CO.

Allyson Forest, MPA, Jennifer Lucarelli, PhD, and Kristen Wiltfang, MS. October, 2016. "A Participatory Approach to Engaging Community Members in Non-Motorized Transportation Policy Planning." Oral presentation presented at the Annual American Public Health Association Conference. Denver, CO.

HPWC was featured in the inaugural "Healthology Symposium" hosted by the School of Health Sciences, with Jennifer Lucarelli, Kristen Wiltfang, and Shannon Brownlee as featured presenters; Wiltfang & Brownlee are both from Oakland County.

\*Graduate student contributor

### PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO OU/PONTIAC INITIATIVE WORK

Information and Communication Technologies Integration in Literacy Instruction: A Formative Design Experiment to Improve Preservice Teacher Preparation Methods. SEHS Research Support Committee (RSC). PI, Funded \$3,000 (2016-2017).

Preparing Teachers to Integrate Digital Literacies into Instruction: A Formative Design Experiment. University Research Committee (URC). PI, Funded \$1,200 (2016-2017).



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